

Ely Scrapbook 1897 to 1999

Facts, Features and (occasional) Fallacies
reported in Cambridge Newspapers

summarised by

Mike Petty

Most of these stories originally appeared in the Cambridge Daily/Evening/News or the
Cambridgeshire Weekly News, its sister title.

They are supplemented by some articles published in the
Cambridge Independent Press or Cambridge Chronicle

Most were featured in my 'Looking Back' column in the Cambridge News from 1996-2014, others
appeared in my 'Memory Lane, Ely & the Fens' (Breedon 2001)

The complete 'Cambridgeshire Scrapbook' of which this is a small section is published online at
bit.ly/CambsCollection

I have digital and other copies of most of the stories summarised.
I hope to publish these online one day. If you would like them in the meantime then please get in
touch.

The original volumes are housed in the Cambridgeshire Collection at Cambridge Central Library
where there are many other indexes dating back to 1770.

They also have detailed newspaper cuttings files on over 750 topics that have been compiled since the
1960s.

Newspapers sometimes get things wrong. I copy things out incorrectly. Do check

There are a multitude of spelling and layout errors. Please forgive or correct them

News never stops but this file was finished on 31 August 2016.

I will maintain supplements and corrections – contact me for anything you need

Please make what use of these notes that you may. Kindly remember where they came from

See my website – www.mikepetty.org.uk for further notes.

Mike Petty, Stretham

2016

1897 02 25

Ely Medical Officer of Health report 1896, p3

1897 03 10

Rat up tree, Ely, p4

1897 03 10

Gamlingay: Very wet weather has been experienced in this district for some time past and fine weather is now very urgently required. The clay land has lacked the pulverising influence of frosts and the heavy rains have beaten the land down to such a tenacious mass that drilling will be very difficult and unsatisfactory. The mild winter has enabled the farmer and grazier to keep his stock on the grass. A short time ago a visitor at Gamlingay was changing trains at Ely when his attention was called by the stationmaster to the novel view of about 60 rats "up a tree" near the station. The heavy rains had flooded the district including a farmhouse and yard, and the rats to escape drowning had mounted the tree

1897 03 23

Ely Methodist organ, p4

1897 03 25

Ely money for poor, p2

1897 04 14

Ely Jubilee proposals, p2

1897 05 12

Ely tallow works move, p3

1897 05 18

On Monday last Mr Marshall Fisher of Ely celebrated his 92nd birthday, and received numerous congratulations and good wishes. He is (with the exception of a little deafness) in full possession of his faculties. When asked by our representative the secret of his long continued good health, he replied that he had always been strictly temperate, and smoked but once in his life. By the courtesy of Mr Fisher our representative was shown round his museum

1897 05 21 c

At Ely Urban District Council meeting a number of cases of waste water, defective cisterns and sanitary defects were reported. The pump at Queen Adelaide, which had been put out of order through mischievous boys putting stones in, had been repaired at a cost of £2. Warning notices had been put up.

1897 06 19

Cambridge will have its bonfire on Jubilee night and from the nature of the site we shall have it all to ourselves. Midsummer Common is to be the venue, and as that is about the flattest part of Cambridge there is not much prospect of its being seen beyond the limits of the town, although should the fire be a big one and the night fairly dark, the glow in the sky ought to be seen all over the fen country. One of the most interesting experiments will be that of the search-light on Ely cathedral. The great shaft of light sent out by the search-light, first in one direction and then another, should send a message not only to Cambridge, but over a great portion of East Anglia – editorial

1897 07 14

The cathedral city of Ely presented an unwontedly animated appearance when it was the rendezvous for the annual festival of the Ely branch of the Church of England Temperance Society. The promotion of temperance, the reformation of the intemperate and the removal of the causes that lead

to intemperance are the main objects of the society and it works by means of pole court and prison gate missions, labour homes, racecourse and van missions, inebriate homes etc. The preacher remarked that the society worked not against publicans or the drink but against drunkenness, which was a burden upon their country and the blackest spot in this year of thanksgiving.

1897 08 04

Ely sports

1897 08 11

The ancient city of Ely is greatly favoured in the variety of country rambles which one may enjoy across fields etc. This morning a chum and myself, whilst indulging in one of these old walks - not much frequented now - from the junction of Kettlesworth and Clayway Drovers to New Barnes, were astonished to find about midway across the first field, that a fence had been erected, along the top of which was stretched a barbed (or barbarous) wire. We saw two labourers who said "There's a new chap got this 'ere land, and he thinks he's going to stop the path, but he can't. I should go on if I were you" – letter

1897 08 19

Death Col. W.H. Baldwin of Ely, p4

1897 08 25

Ely sewers, p3

1897 10 01

A little girl, aged nine, a daughter of a labourer was killed by lightning while sitting at tea in her home at Great Paxton, near St Neots. Her little brother was also knocked down and rendered unconscious, but is recovering. His body is marked with the complete outline of a tree, the branches being shown distinctly. The lightning came through the roof, making a hole in the ceiling. At Ely it is computed that the rainfall was about 150 tons per acre; a sheep was killed at Stretham and Mr J. Yarrow of Thetford, had a mare and foal killed

1897 11 03

Ely fair, p4

1897 12 06

A testimonial was presented to Mr W.B. Taylor, chief clerk at Newmarket Post Office, who is retiring. Mr Taylor became a telegraph learner under the old Electric Telegraph Company at Ely, and in 1855 was transferred to King's Lynn, where he remained in charge of the telegraph office until 1868. In that year he was appointed to Newmarket where for a considerable period he was the only telegraph operator in the town. When in 1870 the Government took over the telegraph service he was appointed chief clerk. The telegraphic work at Newmarket has increased enormously. On days upon which important races are run several thousand messages are despatched and received and other weeks sometimes as many as 2,500 messages are handled in a day.

1898 01 15

Organ grinder & Ely girl, p3

1898 01 28

The Wicken carrier was charged with cruelty to a mare by working it while in an unfit state. Inspector Bartholomew, R.S.P.C.A., said he noticed the defendant at the top of Fore Hill, Ely. He was driving a bay mare in a carrier's cart. When three parts up the hill he stopped, and before he got to the top of the hill he stopped again. When he got to the top he hailed him and he stopped, and the animal stretched, put both legs out, hung his head and appeared exhausted. The animal was in a wretchedly poor condition. He called Mr Thomas Runciman, vet, of Ely who said he found the mare aged and rather

poor and small. He, however, did not think the animal was in an unfit state to work. Magistrates dismissed the case

1898 03 25

Ely mischievous boys, p4

1898 05 27

Ely May fair attracted crowds from all the fens round. Ely was crowded, and foot traffic on High street and round the market was brought almost to a standstill. At the business fair there was a capital show of carthorses but very few purchasers. Inferior horses were very slow trade, and this may apply to cattle of which there was but a small supply, and few purchasers. The pleasure fair, although smaller than usual, was crowded all day, and the stall keepers will have no cause to grumble

1898 06 02

At Ely Urban District Council meeting Mr Wycherley asked why one of their employees should be employed in cleaning windows at the Old Post Office in the council's hours. The chairman remarked the surveyor must be careful in future, and not employ the council's employees in the council's time upon such work. Work was reported to have been done at the Fore Hill concrete paths, also asphaltting the Palace Green. The surveyor reported that 22 tons of broken granite had been received from the Ely workhouse and was most satisfactory. The window blinds of the various shops were satisfactory with a few exceptions, and the Clerk was directed to write to certain parties who have not yet conformed to the regulations required

1898 06 14

A few evenings ago a young cyclist well known in Broad Street, Ely, was "scorching" along the Stretham Road. It was nearly dark, and he saw in the distance what appeared to him two bicycles abreast, with lights shining brightly. Being adept on the cycle, he thought he would shoot between them, when much to his surprise, and before he could stop his "horse", he found he had collided with a traction engine, much to the damage of the bike.

1898 06 27

Ely runaway bus, p3

1898 07 28

Telephone wires, Cambridge - Ely

1898 08 03

Ely sports, p2 *

1898 08 19

Ely basket maker, Scott, drowned, p3, inquest 11th p3

1898 09 29

Henley Arthur Bedwell, a Cambridge piano and organ builder claimed £2 from the Great Eastern Railway for damages sustained by a piano and a case which had been considerably damaged by wet. The manager of the Cutter inn, Ely said he packed the piano before it was sent back. He took it to Ely station and deposited in a goods shed. James Merry, goods foreman at the station, gave evidence as to loading the piano safely on a truck. A tarpaulin was tied over it. There were some barrels of beer in the same wagon, but they were not leaking. Harold Pain, an optician, produced a register proving that there was no rain during the transit of the piano.

1898 11 23

There was an exceptionally sat occurrence on Fore Hill, Ely. A traction engine, drawing two trucks and with a portable engine in the rear, made the descent of the Hill. This proved so difficult that the attention of a considerable number of onlookers was arrested. The driver appeared unable powerless

to control either the speed of the machine or the erratic course taken by the trucks. The engine at the rear careered from one side to the other. Two youths took refuge in the passage leading to the Conservative club. They remained there until the engine had passed, but did not notice the engine in the rear, and as they came out of the passage one of its wheels came in contact with the pavement near them and broke off. One boy received such serious injuries that last night he died

1899 05 24

The Fore Hill, Ely, was the scene of a mishap. A brake crowded with Sutton people was proceeding up the hill, with only one horse attached to it. All went well till Mr Cross' shop when the animal's strength proved unequal to the strain and the vehicle ran backwards. People saw the serious position of the holiday makers, but the vehicle fortunately turned safely across the hill, though the wheels came sharply in contact with the curb. One or two of the occupants jumped out without injuring themselves

1899 06 23

P.C. Hills said his attention was called to a disturbance in Bull Lane, Ely. The defendant was raving about a ghost and saying there were about 200 people in the lane, but witness could see no one in the street beside themselves. There were several looking out at the windows. Defendant was using obscene language to his wife who was in the house and witness had to take him into custody. Defendant said: "The policeman asked me about the ghost and I told him it woke my children up. I had to sit up in the front of my own house till three o'clock in the morning"

1899 07 07

Ely Waterside fire, p3

1899 11 08

Ely burglary, p3

1900 03 30

Four youths living in Ely were summoned under the Highways Act for playing hockey in West End. All pleaded guilty except Smith, who claimed he did not touch the ball. PC Green said they were running about and knocking the ball into the middle of the road. Smith had said "There's Green, he'll have you". Play paused for a while but was resumed in St John's Place. Defendants were ordered to pay 8s.6d. the court expenses, between them

1900 05 19

Newmarket was overjoyed to hear the good news of the relief of Mafeking and soon Union Jacks were flying from nearly every house and shop. At St Ives the news was heralded by the explosion of detonators and the streets were at once decorated. At Ely a crowd of enthusiasts marched round the streets carrying flags and at Saffron Walden bunting was displayed in all directions. There was a good congregation at Over church service consisting chiefly of men who came direct from their work.

1900 05 22

The City of Ely played a worthy part in the general celebrations at the relief of Mafeking. The citizens were early astir and as the day wore on the main thoroughfares presented a gay and animated scene. Between eight and nine o'clock shops began to close, whilst everybody thronged in the direction of Market Hill. A procession was formed including Vernon Cross in his van disguised as Kruger, several members of the Ely Constitutional Club cyclists and members of the Ely Volunteers. It travelled via Broad Street to the Market Hill where a large bonfire was lighted. The rejoicings lasted until midnight.

1900 08 09

At Ely council the Surveyor gave a list of bedding etc, which by direction of the Medical Officer of Heath, had been removed to Common muckhill pending the Council's instructions either to burn or retain for fumigation. It was resolved to destroy the articles. Mr Norman said they must be careful in

burning the articles at Common muckhill. The Chairman (to the Surveyor): "Don't set fire to the place". (Laughter)

1900 08 30

Ely accidentally shot

1900 10 13

The news of the Conservative victory in East Cambs was received at Ely with unbounded jubilation by wearers of the pink favours. As night approached there was a good deal of movement in the streets. At 9 o'clock a procession started led by Mr J. Newstead on horseback, who dressed in khaki and wore his medals, then came Peterborough Band, Holy Trinity drum & fife band, men on horseback bedecked with pink ribbons, decorated bicycles and numerous carriages. Fireworks were discharged in the street to the accompaniment of cheers.

1900 10 15

Ely torchlight procession, p3 *

1900 12 06

Of all the memorable occasions which have gathered together the populace to the mother church of the diocese surely one of the greatest and noblest on record must be the memorial service for those who have fallen in South Africa. The Precentor read the painfully long list of those who had been killed in action or died of disease during the war including Charles Hemmings, Robert Holland, William Johnson, Henry Norman & George Pomeroy, (the Ely Volunteers standing during the time

1900 12 10

Ely Boer War memorial, p3 *

1900 12 12

Ely Council's surveyor reported he had visited several house in Fieldside and Cambridge Road where overcrowding existed. At one house two adults and five children (including a boy aged 14) dwelt in one chamber, which was divided by a very thin partition. In another there were two adults and five children in one chamber. In West-end there was a large undrained yard tenanted by a man, where cows and pigs were kept and a nuisance notices was ordered to be served.

1901 01 09

Mr Luddington said that people might think Littleport was a plague-infested place – (Mr Cutlack: So it is). There was nothing to prevent typhoid germs floating down the river from Ely, while the fen engines were constantly pouring in water that was impure. There was the flood time and the time when the reeds were cut and allowed to lie in the water and stink. Let them look up the river that day and ask themselves if the water was fit to drink.

1901 02 06

Mr Archer remarked that Ely was somewhat behind in expressing their loyalty to the new King. It would be rather a slur if it were the only county which did not make a proclamation. The High Sheriff had said the thought Wisbech was the capital of the Isle. (Cries of "No, no"). It was the wish of the people of Ely that he come down and cause a proclamation to be made

1901 02 08

The ceremony of proclaiming King Edward VII was carried out at Ely. The High Sheriff in his official uniform read the Proclamation from the steps of the Shire Hall and a procession then marched along High Street to the Market Hill where thousands of people were congregated to hear the Proclamation again read. Every point of vantage was seized upon and it was refreshing to see the much-maligned Jubilee fountain proved to be a useful stand for sightseers.

1901 02 15

Sir: It has been brought to our notice that certain disparaging remarks were made at an Ely council meeting re the reception of the Ely Volunteers on our return from South Africa. We were very sorry and indignant to hear of the sneers and remarks made. When Mr Norman returns from a patrol up Cambridge Road does he require a band? We came out here to fight for our country and never hoped for or wanted an official reception. The only reception we want, and the best we can have, is that we are sure to receive from the dear ones we have left behind. – Ptes A. Barnard, S. Chapman, C. Cullum & A. Richardson, South Africa

Ely International Stores plan, p2

1904 04 03

Ely scarlet fever, p3

1901 06 05

A goodly number of citizens assembled at the presentation to the Ely Volunteers in recognition of their service in South Africa. A good English lever watch and a sum of money was presented to Chaplain Crookham, Corp Wilkinson, Trooper W. Long and Privates Barnard, Chapman, Richardson & Cullum. There were three more who they hoped would be coming home some day, viz Serg Rickwood & Troopers Ferris and Head. Their gifts would be reserved for them. These young men of the Empire had sprang spontaneously forward to offer their services & it was wonderful to see men occupied mostly in sedentary pursuits coming to the front with all the old spirit of their forefathers.

1901 06 26

The success of the Ely branch of the Railway Mission must give the promoters the greatest satisfaction. Time was when the meetings were held in the waiting-room at Ely station, afterwards the gatherings took place in a small building in Barton Square, till it was found desirably to remove to the Liberal Hall pending the erection of a new mission in Silver Street. Gypsy Smith led the way at the laying of the foundation stone, accompanying on the violin the singing of the hymn "Onward, Christian Soldiers".

1901 07 10

A rather peculiar accident occurred in Lynn Road, Ely. A load of hay, weighing about a ton, was being carted to the Ely railway station by a young man, Sidney Jugg. The girth band under the horse suddenly broke and the weight of the hay immediately tipped the cart up and lifted the horse bodily into the air. Jugg was thrown between the shafts but escaped with a bruised leg. Meanwhile the horse was hanging in its perilous position, with its hind legs touching the ground but in its struggle managed to break loose and free itself. There was a terrific crash when the cart tipped up, large trusses of hay were strewn all over the road, and both shafts supports were badly cracked.

1901 08 08

A meeting of professional and amateur photographers met to arrange the Cambridge meeting of the Photographic Convention. The following were elected to the Committee: Messrs W. Redfern, Tyndall (Ely), Bolton (Ely), Wilson (Saffron Walden) and Stearn Bros. Mr Sanderson (Palmer Clarke) was voted to the chair. Mr Sidney Johnson, a University man, an amateur photographer and a contributor to the photographic papers was nominated as secretary.

1901 08 16

Ely lions cage, p4 *

1901 10 16

Ely council heard that some years ago certain ratepayers were allowed to put stalls on the Market Place on Saturday nights, and it was then understood that they should be put there in the afternoon. Now stalls were there from 8 o'clock in the morning and throughout the whole day. On Sunday morning they would find all kinds of offal left from the previous night and discarded fruit attracted numbers of wasps. There was lately introduced a fish stall with the refuse thrown about. They did not

object so long as the stalls were confined to Ely tradesmen but found people came from Cambridge. If something were not done it would evolve itself into another Saturday market

1901 11 08

Ely Saturday market, p3

1902 01 09

Ely Vineyards wall, p3 *

1902 05 23

Ely Board of Guardians discussed what they proposed to do in regard to the Coronation and agreed to only one day's festivities. Mr Darby said they at Sutton wished to bring over to the village all the inmates belonging thereto. The Guardians had no objection. Coronation fare for the inmates should be similar to that provided at Christmastime and during the afternoon they would be allowed to attend the festivities in the town. Each would be presented with a Coronation medal and the Master would provide four sets of draughts and dominoes for the use of inmates.

1902 07 04

Ely pauper's last journey, p3

1902 08 01

Foster sale, Ely, p2

1902 09 05

The oldest living printer in the British Isles is Thomas A. Hills of Ely who has reached the patriarchal age of 95. So hale is the venerable craftsman that it is little more than six years since he finally disposed of his business to Mr Tyndall. His 80th birthday was celebrated by the composition of a "Conditions of Sale" unexpectedly received after the staff had closed down for the holiday and which were wanted in a great hurry. Another proof of his wonderful vitality was the perfect performance of the duties of town crier in 1902, a post he held for many years.

1902 09 15

The Horticultural Society's photographic exhibition was a great improvement on last year. The amateur photographer was apt to follow the lead of the professional and be influenced by his window exhibits. The professional photographer had absolutely the last chance in the world of producing the best photography because he had to work at a price and gain a livelihood. The Rev H.R. Campion, Ely, won a silver medal for a photograph of the entrance of Bishop West's Chapel, Ely and A.G. Swannell was commended for a study of Houghton Mill

1902 09 25

There was a large attendance at a meeting to discuss forming a camera club in Cambridge. A long time ago there was a club but it had died through lack of interest. Prior to that there had been a club in connection with the University. In the early 1880s it was going fairly strongly but ultimately closed. Since then there was a club in conjunction with the YMCA but what they wanted was a club unsectarian. It ought to be social, but not political. Mr Tindall said he could get ten members from Ely and they had promises from villages all around Cambridge

1902 10 11

The proprietors of the CDN also publish the "Ely Weekly Guardian" and is represented in Ely by a reporter who devotes his whole time to our service. Messrs Sharman and Co publish the "City of Ely Standard" which competes in the surrounding district. During the past few months large quantities of news have been taken from the CDN and published in their paper. Now we have received a letter from Mr A. Sharman to say he has requested his staff to refrain from "scissors and paste" in future.

1902 10 31

Ely council has conferred with the manager of the Gas Company as to the proposed new lamps on Ely High Bridge. It was agreed the light should be incandescent, but should the wind prove too strong for it the gas manager would substitute ordinary burners. Mr Archer asked if the bridge was outside the council's jurisdiction and whether they ran the risk of the expense for the new lamps being surcharged to the Council. The bridge was not theirs. The Clerk replied they were doing a duty to the district and he did not think they would be surcharged. He was quite willing to go to prison over it.

1902 10 31

An Ely man was summonsed for assault. Levi Denton said he was in the farmer's field gathering blackberries without asking his permission. Defendant, who had a large stick, came up and asked what he was doing – but he could see for himself. He then caught hold of his whiskers, knocked him down, kicked him and dragged him out of the gate. Mr Denton went back into the field for his basket. The chairman: "I observe one side of your beard is longer than the other. Was it pulled out by the accused?" Denton: "Yes, and they are on the field now, if not picked up" But he was on the wrong side of 50 and whiskers come out more easily at that age. The case was dismissed

1902 12 24

During a lull in the traffic at Ely Railway Station, Sir George Newnes, the former Liberal MP for East Cambs, addressed a gathering of railway men on the green outside the station. The railway audience was augmented by citizens who gave their former member a cordial welcome. The railway authorities, he said, had been very kind in allowing the men to leave their work to hear him.

1903 01 05

Ely football team paid their first visit to the enclosure of the Haverhill Rovers, and after a somewhat scrambling game were defeated. Give-and-take play followed for a time, good back play on both sides preventing the goalkeepers being troubled. Woodward had a good opening but the muddy state of the ground caused him to slip whilst E.R. Evans was tripped by Arber when he had got away. The final score was Rovers 5, Ely 0.

1903 03 30

Ely Social Anglers have some 40 paying members but there was a lack of enthusiasm. Although they offered various prizes for the best fish caught not one single fish had been weighed in. It had been an unsatisfactory season but surely someone had landed something worth weighing. Monthly meetings were held at which all members were invited to attend in convivial and piscatorial conversation and debate but they had not been a success.

1903 04 07

The Rev K.H. Smith told Ely Burial Board of the state of things at a funeral. The curator was busy and so was the gravedigger, with their respective engagements, and, no policeman being on duty, just before the interment the gate was left unattended. An army of little children came into the cemetery and he narrowly escaped being swept into the grave by their pushing. There should be some regulation that children should not be allowed close to the grave at funerals.

1903 08 07

Ely small pox, p4

1903 08 14

Ely Council considered the site for a small-pox hospital, a temporary building of wood and iron; they agreed to hire 22 acres of land in Grunty Fen, two miles from any village. A case of smallpox had occurred at Wilburton after somebody was allowed to come from a house at Cambridge where the disease existed. None of them were safe if that sort of thing could occur. Dr Anningson said there was another possible cause but did not speak in a tone that could be heard by the reporter.

1903 08 21

An Ely fishmonger was summonsed for keeping a refreshment house open during prohibited hours. Inspector Burton said he saw five men in the shop eating fish at 11.10pm. There were no forms, knives or forks and they stood against the counter and ate the fish with their fingers. One of them saw him watching whereupon the fishman shouted "You can't eat that fish here; you'll get me into trouble" and they picked up the fish and came out of the shop. When fined 9s. he replied "This is a cheap advertisement for me"

1903 09 12

Colonel W.F. Cody, known as 'Buffalo Bill', is to bring his famous "Wild West show to Ely. The cast of 700 includes American cowboys and Indians, Russian Cossacks, South American gauchos and some of Roosevelt's Rough Riders. It includes the exciting representation of an attack by Indians upon an American stagecoach and a remarkable demonstration of skill with the rifle by Colonel Cody.

1903 09 16

Buffalo Bill's "Wild West" circus visited Ely. In the early morning many heavy show waggons conveyed all the apparatus from the G.E.R. station to Gill's Field, Common Road where the work of fixing up the tents was watched with unflagging interest. The programme opened with an overture, then a waggon train was seen to be crossing the plains when it was attacked by marauding redskins. The cowboys opened fire and after a sharp fight drove off the enemy. The show left an impression of wonder and delight that cannot fail to remain for a long time to come.

1903 09 25

Ely passive resisters, p4 *

1903 10 02

There has been speculation at Ely as to the identity of the unknown person who paid the education part of Mr Cragg's rate and thus prevented his appearance before the magistrates and also a Nonconformist demonstration. Now it appears the Prickwillow Baptists have been treated in a similar fashion. When Mr H. Drake of Sutton came before the magistrates there were very few nonconformists in court as they were not aware the case was coming forward. There will be much more heard of passive resistance after the next rate has been levied.

1903 10 05

The passive resistance movement in Ely has suffered a temporary check. The Nonconformists were intending to hold a large demonstration after Mr Cragg of Lynn Road had appeared at the Police Court for non-payment of the education rate. All preparations were made, the meeting place fixed and speakers engaged. But at the last moment the defendant received notification that the rate and costs had been paid. This caused great indignation amongst the Nonconformists, leading them to abandon their programme.

1904 01 07

Ely T.A. Hills town crier, p3

1904 01 16

The Old Bailey heard the case of an Ely lady, Florence R.; her first husband William had obtained a divorce nisi citing Henry F. as co-respondent, though it was never made absolute. But Florence married Henry, or at least went through a form of marriage, but as the first was not dissolved the second wedding was illegal and bigamous. Further complications followed. Henry went away to South Africa and she made the acquaintance of a man named B., whom she subsequently married. Her mother subsequently married William's father in the belief he was dead. William thus occupies this bewildering position: His father is his father-in-law. His mother-in-law is his step-mother. His wife is his step-sister. Two other men have married his wife. Florence was sentenced to five day's imprisonment

1904 02 17

Sir – owing to the recent heavy rains the road from Ely High Bridge to the opposite bank has been submerged for some time. Why does not the Council raise the road, providing tunnels underneath to carry the water away? This would render the approaches less dangerous for vehicular traffic. I am told the road is a private one but the Ely Urban Council lights the bridge and fences the road in times of floods by chains. Why not go farther and place a man and boat there day and night at the public expense also. I have heard it suggested that a temporary platform might be erected by the side of the post for foot passengers – T. Burns, Stuntney

1904 04 07

A memorial tablet commemorating the men of the Isle of Ely who lost their lives during the war in South Africa, 1899-1902, was unveiled at Ely Cathedral. As the hour for the service drew near it was realised that all roads led to the Cathedral and both inhabitants and visitors were making their way to the building. The bugle sounded and soon the military – easily distinguished by their spic and span scarlet uniforms – dotted the main streets as they proceeded to the rendezvous for ‘falling in’. Presently the sounds of martial music fell upon one’s ears, telling that the Militia band, heading a large number of men, had started forth. It was a most picturesque scene, not soon to be forgotten, as the old flags of the Ely Armed Association, 1798, were carried into the cathedral. # c.45.3

1904 07 15

A small private fishery near Ely has become infested with otters. They afford no sport as they cannot be hunted by dogs, to track them in reeds and water is impossible, and they are too cunning to be outwitted in any way. As fish are seriously thinned the holder of the fishery placed himself in a likely spot with a gun. At dusk there was a great deal of crashing among the reeds and two or three large animals began chasing each other in the water. More joined and there was a general plunging and diving all round. Kneeling in the boat the fisherman found one brute with a widely distended mouth close to his elbow, the gleam of the teeth was quite ferocious. That such shy animals should show signs of attacking can only be accounted for by the mating season.

1904 07 25

Residents in Cambridge were among the witnesses of a race between two balloons which started from the Crystal Palace. The first, named the Norfolk, contained Mr C.F. Pollock, D. Lloyd and J.T.C. Moore Brabazon and the second, the Aero Club No.1 contained the Hon C.S. Rolls, a former Cambridge man, Prof Huntingdon and Mr Frank Butler. Mr Pollock obtained a lead of several miles by trailing – keeping very low and trailing a rope along the ground – but this could not be done for long as a village had to be ‘jumped’. When approaching Bottisham it was very near the ground and a number of cyclists awaited the descent; their hopes were doomed when the occupants threw out a quantity of ballast and ascended to a good height. A safe landing was effected near Ely for one balloon and the second was captured by a motor that was sent to chase it.

1904 07 29

The quietude of Ely was rudely disturbed by news of a shocking tragedy enacted on Back Hill, one of the most peaceful parts of the old City. A bricklayer’s labourer twice shot at his neighbour with a double-barrelled gun, the bullets going through her left breast and causing such deadly wounds that she shortly afterwards expired. He then coolly walked into his own house and shot himself through the head. The murder caused the greatest sensation, news spread with rapidity to all parts and the place of the ghastly murder, the humble home of a cottager, became the scene of the greatest excitement Ely has known for years, particularly evinced by the arrival on the scene of several photographers

1904 08 15

Mrs Sarah Ann Edwards told the Soham court that she had several occupations and besides being a midwife and a washerwoman, prepared dead bodies for burial. She purchased a pony and lent it to her husband who went to Fordham with it. He got very drunk and went to the Windmill where he made a bargain for the pony with William Harlock. It was taken from the cart and replaced by another one. This was a broken-down creature, only fit for the knacker’s yard. When her husband got home she

went in search of her own animal and found it in the Ely pig market. Harlock said he had bought it from her husband

1904 09 09

An NSPPC Inspector told the court he visited a cottage at Babylon, over the river at Ely. The house was very dirty and smelt very bad. The children were 'very very dirty' and an infant was laid in a clothes' basket. All the bedding in the house was an old flock bed lying on an old straw mattress which was rotten, and all was wet and dirty and full of vermin. The wife said she had emptied the bed and washed the tick which was hung out to dry. He could not see it she said the wind must have blown it down. She went to the fence bottom and pulled up an old rotten piece of bag. It was full of slugs and worms and had obviously been lying there some time. She said 'I am going to wash it and my husband will fill it with straw

1904 11 07

Damage was sustained at Quay caused by youths who cherished a desire to celebrate the 'Fifth' in a manner more realistic than by a common pyrotechnics display. A stack of mustard seed on Caius Farm provided the fuel for a blaze and was utterly destroyed. Stacks on the Stuntney Road at Ely also caught fire. It was noticed by some boys standing on the High Bridge who conveyed the news to the Railway Station from where a telephone message was immediately dispatched to the Police Station and the Fire Brigade quickly summoned. But the fire had got a firm hold and the six stacks formed a great blaze that could be seen for miles around.

1904 11 15

A gruesome accident occurred at the railway crossing at Little Thetford. Two men were returning from Fulbourn with the corpse of an Ely native who was by trade a basket maker and had been detained in the asylum. A four-wheel cart, with no lights, collided with their trap which was turned over on to its side. The horse was dragged down with it and the two men hurt. The coffin containing the corpse was left on the road and the trap had to make a second journey to convey the remains to Ely

1904 12 08

Ely electric lighting, p4 *

1905 02 03

Ely medical officer reported that the want of house accommodation for the working classes had led to cases of overcrowding. The low-level sewers in Annesdale and Waterside had been thoroughly cleaned out and defects remedied. Three old cesspools in connection with the sewers at Ship Quay, Blackbird's Yard and the bottom of Victoria Street, which required frequent emptying, had been abolished and new manholes substituted. The emptying of ashpits was now done fortnightly and the removal of house refuse from ash boxes and pails thrice weekly was about to be started. The isolation hospital, he was sorry to say, did not exist, although it was much needed. 05 02 03

1905 03 17

Two Ely Passive Resisters should have appeared before magistrates for non-payment of their education rate. Summonses had been served on each – Mr A.E. Cragg intends to have his framed – but then both received a curt note to say the money had been paid and the proceedings stopped. They were indignant and now must wait until the rate becomes due again. So far no Passive Resister has graced the Ely court for on four occasions the money has been paid anonymously 05 03 17a

1905 03 24

A sad discovery was made at Ely of a tailor, found dead on the Cutter Railway Bridge. His head was in the four-foot way, severed from the body, which was on the other side of the line, and his hat and collar were on the buttress of the bridge. He was last seen at 10.40 pm when he was going in the direction of the Great Eastern Railway gates, near the station 05 03 24b

1905 04 28

Mr James Runciman, son the veterinary surgeon of Ely, met with a serious accident while driving his trap along the Mildenhall Road towards Littleport. His horse shied on meeting a motor and plunged head first into a deep ditch, breaking its neck. Mr Runciman was thrown after it and the trap overturned on top of him. He managed to extricate himself and was taken to the house of Mr Glover, a farmer, where he was treated with the greatest kindness. The motorists pulled up about 30 yards beyond the accident. 05 04 28a

1905 05 16

Ely now has a thoroughly up-to-date, well equipped girls' secondary school as Bedford House has opened to scholars. It includes a large room used for recreation during wet weather, the old kitchen is now fitted up for the teaching of cookery and the stables converted into a preparatory school. No stranger going over the building would have imagined the use to which it was once put 05 05 16c

1905 07 08

Ely council debated whether to acquire a steam fire engine. Messrs Merryweather's estimate was £314 and they were willing to allow payment to be spread over three years. But they would have to build an engine house. Cambridge had many more valuable buildings and they did not think it worth having one. Many ratepayers felt it was not required; they had a system of hydrants and a very good pressure which would reach any ordinary building without an engine at all. But several shopkeepers said they should have one. 05 07 08a-c

1905 07 15

Mr J.A Martin of Ely said the water supply of the country was a most difficult question. In the fen district the rivers constituted the main supply and every precaution ought to be taken to keep them free from contamination. If they could utilise the water out of the rivers they would have as good a supply as they could wish. Mr Luddington of Littleport said many of the inhabitants turned to the river for their supply but the city of Ely poured crude sewage into the stream above them. 05 07 15a-d

1905 07 22

Ely river tragedy, p3

1905 07 25

Littleport Parish Council considered a report on the outbreak of typhoid in the village in 1904. Their natural water supply was from the river but Ely council was now planning to discharge a large quantity of extra sewage into the Ouse. A piped water supply was said to be too expensive and nobody would give them a direct reply to their enquiries. 05 07 25b

Ely river victim, p3

1905 08 29

Cambridge councillors refused to allow the Post Office to lay an underground cable along Emmanuel Road to complete a telegraphic communication with Ely if telephone wires belonging to the National Telephone Company were also laid. Now the Postmaster will have to exercise statutory powers to complete the work. There is already direct communication with Ipswich, Norwich and Peterborough; recently a private wire giving the state of play in the Cambs v Norfolk match was handed in at Norwich Post Office and in the offices of the C.D.N. eight minutes later. 05 08 29a & b

1905 08 29

Baby Ely manhole, p3

1905 09 26

The Bishop of Norwich has accused a Suffolk vicar of immoral conduct. He was curate of Holy Trinity church, Ely when he made the acquaintance of a somewhat eccentric lady with partiality for the cloth who offered him a living of his own at Wickham Market. This he accepted. Later she was admitted to a London workhouse and sought his assistance, which he declined. In the meantime his congregation dwindled away, the choir, organist and bellringers withdrew their service, repairs to the church were neglected and church work paralysed. 05 09 26b-c

1905 10 03

A gruesome discovery was made near the G.E.R. station of Black Bank, a few miles past Ely. On the railway line was found the trunk of a man's body, and some feet away the head which had evidently been severed by a passing train. The body has been identified as a publican of Little Downham who was formerly in the Militia Band at Ely. 05 10 03

1905 10 18

The picturesque little church in the village of Kedington has recently been visited by some nefarious individual and the two alms-boxes robbed of their contents. One box is of a unique construction and consists of an oak tree trunk firmly embedded in the ground, hollowed out at the top and having an old iron lid. The church is locked during the week and there is no indication of forced entry; the robber may have got the key from the Post Office.

Bishop of Ely consecration, p3

1905 11 01

Bishop of Ely enthroned, p3

1905 12 22

Telegrams between Ely and Cambridge are transmitted via London and much time is lost. A Cambridge physician received a wire from Ely requesting his immediate presence. He at once despatched a telegram saying he would travel by the next train, hailed a cab and drove to the station. At Ely he had to walk a mile to the house he was visiting – and arrived before the telegram! Considering the intimate connection that exists between the two towns, particularly in the fruit season, this is most undesirable. 05 12 22a

1906 01 04

Ely workhouse trial, p4

1906 01 19

The Ely surveyor said he had examined the Prickwillow Road and found that for 140 chains between the Norwich gates and the Old Bank the road was badly cut up. For some months there had been exceptionally heavy traffic caused by Messrs R. Drake of Sutton's traction engines and wagons who had been making three or four journeys a week carting agricultural produce. 06 01 19

1906 01 27

Ely election picture, p3*

1906 02 02

Ely boys birched for sweet stealing – Creaks – 06 02 02b

1906 03 08

A miniature rifle range for Morris tube practice opened on the premises of Mr W.H. Rickwood. It is central, comfortable and contains all the essential points of a good range, making it a valuable addition to the equipment of the Ely Volunteers. To make the Empire safe it was important that every man could shoot and shoot straight. Capt Stuart, the new Militia adjutant formally opened it by firing down the range and Lieut Bullock also shot. 06 03 08e

1906 03 15

The militia assembled at Ely barracks for training. Recruit numbers are a record: it provides men with a healthy enjoyable holiday and brings them in winter, when wages are low and work scarce, a bounty which must prove acceptable. They are paid a shilling a day, a sum that scores of farm labourers would regard as munificent. They also receive certain articles of clothing and boots which they are allowed to retain and last till the next training. The barracks have a pleasant recreation room and good food, regular hours, drill and discipline improve the men both physically and morally. 06 03 15d

1906 03 28

Ely quoits, p4

1906 04 12

Ely should provide better accommodation for the horse and cattle fairs now held in the public streets. The horse fair was very dangerous and the cattle fair a nuisance in more ways than one. They did not want to take the fair away, just make it more respectable. If St Ives could do it, why not Ely? But what was the use of providing a field if they could not compel people to go to it. Councillors decided to take no action 06 04 12d & e

1906 04 16

Lieut-Col Wm Browne Ferris, was appointed Chief Constable of the Isle of Ely in 1879. His death has removed a smart soldier, an excellent officer and a man who gained the loyal, whole-hearted confidence of every member of the force. Born in Belfast he was gazetted to the Suffolk Regiment and served in India before being appointed adjutant of the Ely Militia in 1875. 06 04 16 1906 05 09
A most regrettable accident occurred at Ely Conservative Club garden party to inaugurate the new Morris Tube range and bowling green. Part of the proceedings consisted of a shooting competition for ladies on the indoor miniature range. A number had shot when a rifle held by Mrs J.S. Barnett accidentally exploded and the bullet struck her husband in the neck while he was writing his wife's name on the target. Fortunately the wound was not serious but it spread horror and dismay over the gathering 06 05 09b

1906 06 04

A Government Inspector's report into the derailment of a passenger train near Shippea Hill on April 7th concluded it was caused by unduly high speed over a portion of track under repair. At Cambridge Assizes a 15-year old boy from Prickwillow was indicted for having placed a sleeper on the railway line near Ely on the evening of March 6th. It was hit by the Norwich train and carried for a mile and a quarter 06 06 04b, 06 06 04c, d

1906 09 13

Ely Coroner held an inquest at the resident of Mr Hanslip Long, Shippea Hill into the death of a widow who was knocked down and killed at Shippea Crossing. She had been to the Fish and Duck where she paid for her husband's harvest beer. On returning she saw the train but started to go over the crossing at a tidy stroke and was hit. It was getting dark and they had to strike three matches before they could recognise the body. She was a strong-minded woman and it was difficult to persuade that class of people to do what other people wanted. 06 09 13a

1906 10 18

The octo-centenary of Ely Cathedral is over, the great service of commemoration of benefactors a thing of the past, but nothing short of death itself will ever obliterate the memory of that service from the minds of those who were privileged to be present. The vast building was filled with representatives for every strata in the social scale 06 10 18

1906 10 23

An inquest into the death of an inmate of Ely workhouse who died during the night, was rendered rather unique by the fact that a juror, undismayed by the burden of responsibility and untroubled by the cares which had devolved upon him, had the temerity to go to sleep. He could not be permitted to

turn the court into a temporary bedroom and was roused by the constable and rebuked by the Coroner.
06 10 23

1906 11 15
Ely Lamb case, p4

1906 12 28
The landlord of the Eagle and Lamb, Cambridge Road, Ely was summoned for permitting drunkenness. George Lemon said he had been asked to have a game at 'push penny'. Two pints were bought in and shared by five people. Two more quarts were lost at the game. When he went to the house he had 2s 6d and when the police fetched him out he had only fourpence left. He had spent the rest in drink. He did not remember striking the landlord's daughter or falling down, but did remember being locked up at the police station. 06 12 28

1907 01 09
Mr Harold Archer, Ely solicitor, told the court he'd had taken a shooting party to Decoy Farm which was owned by his wife, where they shot 20 hares, 18 pheasants and one partridge. He gave the tenant four hares and nine hares to the men. The tenant said that he had previously raised no objections to such shooting as he liked to keep on good terms with the landlord but difficulties had arisen over the rent and he was indignant at the treatment meted out by Mr Archer, so he'd refused permission. He'd bred the pheasants that had been shot. 07 01 09 & 09a

1907 01 30
Last week one of His Majesty's motors passing through Ely ran over and killed a dog owned by Mr A. Feast. Mr G.M. Hall brought the matter before the King who, with his customary generosity, has forwarded Mr Feast £5. This is characteristic of his Majesty and is only one of many incidents which have done so much to endear him to his people. 07 01 30

1907 04 05
The curate of St Mary's church, Ely, reported that young people attending services on Sunday evenings were reading novelettes and 'making eyes at each other'. Three ladies had complained that their maids were offended by young men whispering beastliness into their ears. Officials should sit at the back of the church and find the offenders, who would be prosecuted. 07 04 05a

1907 07 10
A daring theft was committed at Mr Haylock's boot shop on the corner of Fore Hill, Ely. The thief simply smashed a pane glass and coolly annexed several pairs of men's boots. The window had previously been slightly damaged by a spike in a cricket boot so the breakage would not make very much noise. The alarm was raised by some children bound for a school treat at Hunstanton who noticed the ransacked window and alerted the manager, Mr A. Saunders. Two men, presumably tramps, were arrested at King's Lynn 07 07 10

1907 08 09
An Ely labourer was charged with being in the house of the Chief Constable, Captain Mander, for an unlawful purpose. PC Kempton said he'd found a window open and a pair of boots in the kitchen. When questioned the man had said: "I don't know where I did leave them. I found myself in the house and then could not find my boots. I have been on the drink for two months". The magistrates said he was so beastly drunk he didn't know what he was doing and dismissed the case. 07 08 09

1907 08 15
A terrible accident occurred at Prickwillow when a governess car, containing seven people, overturned and all the occupants were injured. Three were natives of the village and had hired a trap at Soham for an outing. On the return they mistakenly drove on to the old bank, at one time the main

road to Ely, but now seldom used. As they attempted to turn round the horse, car and occupants went down the bank and into the dyke, a fall of quite 14 feet, being engulfed in the thick black mud. One lady is not expected to recover. 07 08 15a

1907 08 22

Ely Council heard that Burnt Fen Commissioners were about to repair the bridge on Mile-End drove and suggested it should be widened. The County Council had decided to adopt Egremont Street and Silver Street in Ely as main roads, but not Prickwillow Road because of the rolls at Prickwillow Bridge. While they remained it would never be a main road. The time had come to approach the Burnt Fen and Middle Level Commissioners to get them removed. 07 08 22

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1907 11 04

Ely station fatality – 07 11 04 & a

1908 01 10

Everybody in Cambridgeshire is concerned in the attempt to induce the War Office to retain the 4th Battalion Suffolk Regiment, better known as the Cambs Militia. It now only trains once a year and inculcates habits of discipline to the men who join. During the Napoleonic wars it had an exciting time and went to Ireland in 1799. In 1816 they assisted the Royal Dragoons to overpower the Littleport rioters but by 1852 there was only an old sergeant major and some antiquated sergeants at Ely. 08 01 10 h i

1908 02 27

Canon Glazebrook's description of Ely as a "drunken, vicious, place" was a gross libel: last year only four Ely people were brought before the courts for drunkenness, councillors were told. If the Canon believed this he ought to leave off playing golf and give his time to suppressing drunkenness and vice. If not he should clear out of the place for fear the fate of Sodom and Gomorrah should come upon him. (Loud applause). 08 02 27

1908 07 17

Robert Jugg, Orwell Pitts farm, Ely, died after being kicked by a horse which spooked by car driven by Littleport doctor – CWN 08 07 17 p3

1908 10 16

Ely cathedral's new organ incorporates the best part of the old. The electricity for the mechanism is generated by a small dynamo driven by a gas engine. The congregation filled every available space from the chancel gates to the great west doors. Octagon, transepts, nave and triforium were full of people enjoying the great occasion to the full. After the service Sit Walter Parratt held the great assembly enthralled by his wonderful playing. CWN 08 10 16 p7

1909 01 08

A remarkable accident occurred at Ely station when the tank of a liquid fuel engine exploded with disastrous results. The top of the tank was blown clean over the locomotive and fell ten yards away. The driver was thrown off the engine but escaped with a few bruises but the fireman was seriously injured: he was hurled on to the roof of Coote and Warren's coal building, then rolled on to a truck of coal and was found some time later unconscious. CWN 09 01 08

1909 04 16

A mother from New Barnes Road, Ely, said she went out to get some eggs, leaving her baby daughter in the care of her five-year-old brother. She was gone eight minutes. During that time the boy had climbed on a chair to reach a match from the mantelpiece which he struck on the cupboard door, then dropped on the floor where it ignited a piece of paper. The flames set fire to the baby's flannelette nightdress and when she returned the boy was sitting calmly on the hearthrug watching his sister burn to death. 09 04 16

1909 09 10

Mr Barker, a well-known farmer of Clayway Drove, was driving down Ely High Street when he became ill and crashed into Mr Benson's baker's cart. His horse then went on, increasing his pace, collided with the lamp-post against Barclay's Bank and then ran into the cart of Mr R.W. King, butcher. The animal fell on its haunches, then freed itself from the cart before falling and skidding on its side down Fore Hill. Mr Barker suffered concussion and cuts and did not recover consciousness for seven hours. CWN 09 09 10

1909 09 17

Ely cathedral lightning conductors fitted – CWN 09 09 17

1909 12 10

Sir – At one time there were 50 basket makers at work in Ely, today there are not more than 20. The sight of trolley loads of baskets being taken to the railway station for transit away has become a rarity. Many makers are now employed at butchering, cow keeping, chimney sweeping or on the railway. Recently an Ely basket maker went to London for orders and could have had an order for 300 baskets but for the fact that he could not compete with the foreign price – Walter Kirton, Ely. CWN 09 12 10

1909 12 17

In the early hours when all Ely was sound asleep, a fire broke out in the stores of Messrs Sturton and Howard, oil and colour merchants and chemists, Fore Hill. On the ground floor were stored oils and brushes, on the first floor a large quantity of matches, mops and baskets and on the second drugs, stationery etc. There was fortunately little oil in the cisterns and a large quantity of Christmas goods had been recently removed. The whole store was gutted and the walls knocked down. One theory is that vermin might have ignited a box of matches. CWN 09 12 17

1910 02 25

A hurricane with winds of 80 mph caused considerable damage. Hoardings in Belmont Place, King Street, belonging to the Billposting Company were unable to withstand the onslaught of the wind and fell while a large elm tree opposite Trinity Fellows' Garden was bespoiled of its top. At Ely Cathedral a window depicting St John the Baptist was damaged; the apostle's head was blown out but falling upon the lawn, the glass was not broken. At St Ives the wind blew down the home signal on the railway line and caught the gable end of Mr Holloway's music shop in Bridge Street, blowing off four yards of tiles. CWN 10 02 25a & b

1910 05 06

Primitive Methodist Centenary assembly at Ely – 10 05 06 & a

1910 06 24

Some interesting relics were discovered while digging material for the new bridge over the River Ouse near the railway station at Ely. Twelve feet down a number of trees were found lying in a horizontal position, as if they had drifted down in time of flood. Remains of a horse and shells of fresh-water crustaceans were also found. Nearby Babylon, or 'Babblin' as local people call it, is covered with the debris of ancient potteries dating from the 15th to 18th centuries. The family of Merry have lived on this island for centuries and the present members are full of interesting information. 10 06 24d

1910 06 24

A sad accident occurred at Clay Way farm near Ely when a farmer's son was carting farm produce. He was standing on the shaft of a tumbrel proceeding down a drove which was very uneven when he slipped and fell. The wheel of the cart passed over his chest and as the vehicle contained a load of mangolds – a tremendous weight – he was terribly injured. A pathetic feature of the fatality is that the young man was soon to have been married and great sympathy is felt for his fiancée. 10 06 24f

1910 07 22

Ely High Bridge having recently been reconstructed by the Isle of Ely County Council they offered the whole of the ironwork of the old bridge to Cambridgeshire County Council, suggesting it could be re-erected at Twenty Pence Ferry. Cottenham parish council urged acceptance. The county considered the costs of extinguishing any ferry rights and the new road required but declined the offer 10 07 22

1910 09 26

Ely has opened the first women's Conservative Club in the provinces. The building off Silver Street was previously used as a hospital by the Ely Militia with a reading room and excellent bathroom. A large room will be utilised for balls and general meetings. A fete in the grounds of Egremont House featured a display of trophies including a black bear shot in the Himalayas by Mrs Luddington. In the evening Ely City Band played music for dancing on the lawn 10 08 26c

1910 10 14

Ely shepherd's suicide – Daniel Clark – 10 10 14 & a

1911 03 03

An undergraduate motor cyclist going down Fore Hill Ely at a terrific rate, with a college friend on the carrier, rode straight ahead in the direction of the river and did not realise the danger till it was too late. Within a few yards of the Quay the friend threw himself off the carrier, escaping with a few bruises, but the rider was unable to save himself. The weighty cycle fell over the Quay wall and sank immediately and the motorist, turning a somersault, struck the water about mid stream. Mr Merry's boat was moored at the spot and the machine was hauled up thanks to workers from the nearby brewery. Mr Philip Cutlack kindly supplied the dripping driver with a dry suit of clothes and he proceeded to Cambridge by train. 11 03 03h

1911 06 02

George Neal is regarded by Ely people as an interesting character. From the time of the siege of Mafeking 'George' has been a most ardent admirer of Sir R.S. Baden-Powell, and not long ago he received an autographed portrait of that well-known soldier in return for one of himself attired as a Scout. Notwithstanding his infirmities – he is deformed and paralysed – he preserves a cheerful disposition. The Scout Rally at Cambridge proved a great temptation, which he could not resist. Attired as a Scout, having purchased a khaki suit for the purpose, 'George' went to Cambridge hoping to see 'B.P.' It appears he found the exertion of marching too much for him and he returned to Ely somewhat disappointed. Now he has disappeared 11 06 02e

1911 09 15

Mr Edwin Saunders had 30 head of cattle on his farm at Nornea. An old cole seed straw stack stood nearly in the centre of the field and the beasts, by rubbing away the sides, had made a mushroom-shaped shelter. When the thunderstorm broke out most of the cattle retreated to the trees but one, a black cow, was huddled against the stack. Lightning struck the stack, firing it and killing the cow instantaneously. So fierce was the heat that it was impossible to drag it clear of the flames. Huge pieces of burning material were blown a considerable distance, some going right over the roof of the farmhouse. A great number of people flocked to the scene from Stuntney and Ely 11 09 15d

1911 10 13

A mysterious epidemic has broken out at Littleport. Eighteen cases of the disease, thought to be 'spotted fever', have occurred and four people have died. It has appeared in eleven households,

attacking children from 18 months to eight years of age. The schools are being closed and the Littleport pupils of the Ely High School for Girls are not allowed to attend. A report that the disease has also made an appearance at Haddenham is without foundation 11 10 13e

1911 02 01

F.T. Cross was a popular Ely tradesmen but more widely known as an antiquary. The very interesting museum attached to his tearoom on Fore Hill – the result of his own labour and enthusiasm – has been inspected by visitors from around the world. His death, aged 57, is a great loss. 11 02 01h

1912 02 02

A gruesome discovery was made by a man living in Deacon's Lane, Ely. He had been doing repairs in an empty cottage next door to his own and when in the garden noticed an air brick, partly covered with earth. Picking up a fork he uncovered what appeared to be a child's skull. Digging further he discovered wrapped in a bundle of discoloured linen the remains of a child's body. It had laid in the ground for about a year. 12 02 02k

1912 03 15

Ely Medical Officer reported that 18 dwellings in Muriel's Court, Willow Walk, Back Lane and Broad Street were unfit for habitation. They were horrible, some were in a filthy, ruinous and insanitary condition, dangerous to health and not fit for pigs or dogs to live in. On Back Hill a cottage with one room upstairs and one down was being rented for three shillings and sixpence a week. Analysis had found the only water available to tenants was highly polluted with sewage. Such conditions should not be allowed to exist 12 03 15e

1912 05 10

Mr G. Carmichael was appointed resident engineer by the Middle Level Commissioners in 1863 following the flooding at St Germans. He became superintendent of the South Level, then Bedford Level Corporation, Padnal and Waterden and Roswell Pits Commissioners. In 1891 he was also appointed superintendent of the Ouse Outfall Board and Caudle Fen Commissioners, in 1900 of the Middle Fen and in 1909 the Norfolk Estuary Commissioners. After retirement he was elected to the Ely Urban District Council and any advice he gave on drainage matters was treated with importance. 12 04 05d Death Charles W. Stubbs, formerly Bishop of Ely – 12 05 10g

1912 10 04

A review of the recent army manoeuvres recognises the value of cyclists as a screen. The Welsh cyclists biked the whole distance from Cardiff in two days. One of the first cyclist corps was started in Cambridge under Major Rhodes. Those of the Cambridgeshire Territorial Battalion are now drawn from Ely but are only a few in number. There are probably more cyclists in Cambridgeshire than any other county and could easily furnish a whole battalion of wheelman. The number of civilian cyclists noticed at the Manoeuvres was really remarkable and they seemed able to follow the troops anywhere and everywhere. 12 10 04e

1912 10 18

A platelayer laying fog signals on the railway line near Creswell's Bridge, Ely, was knocked down by a light engine and instantly killed. At the time there was patchy fog. A train driver said he had passed the bridge travelling at 35 mph but had not noticed anything. However when he arrived at Peterborough the engine was examined and there were traces of blood on the back of the left-hand side buffer beam and along the engine frame. The man was not deaf, was not drunk but may not have heard the engine, which was very quiet. A verdict of 'Accidental Death' was recorded 12 10 18 & a

1912 10 18

Mildenhall workhouse inmate tries stab man in bus at Ely – 12 10 18g

1912 11 15

Ely butcher Reginald King failure – 12 11 15d & e

1913 01 03

Ely windmill fire 13 01 03

Ely Cambridgeshire Regiment dance in Drill Hall

Ely Wesleyan chapel organ reopening

1913 01 03

Ely Pastor Married. A wedding of great local interest took place at the Wimpole Road Wesleyan Church, Colchester, on Boxing Day, when the Rev. J. Wesley Green, the esteemed pastor of the Countess of Huntingdon Church, Ely, was married to Miss Helen Mary Mason, daughter of Mr. J. H. Mason, of Military Road, Colchester

1913 01 03

Mr. Denison-Pender Takes the Field.—Mr. J. C. Denison-Pender took an eleven to Ely on Saturday to play the Ely City F.C. He is a thorough sportsman and several journeyed to Paradise Recreation Ground especially to see him play. Many good performances on the football field stand to the credit of the prospective Conservative candidate. Although he does not play very often now, he still possesses a fine knowledge of the game, and his every movement was watched with the greatest interest, he appeared at inside left, and occasionally put in some good work. He was fast and tricky, but was opposed to a couple of smart men in Goodin and Holland. The game was well-contested throughout, but at one period it looked as though the City would win by a most convincing margin. Play at the outset was all in their favour and at half-time Ely led by four goals to one. Half an hour of the second half went by without any addition to the score, but then the visitors put on a couple of goals, and were only beaten 4—3. The Rev. R. M. Nicholls (2), Holland and Brislin scored for Ely and Shore (2) and Shepherd for Mr. Denison-Pender's eleven.

1913 01 10

Ely workhouse inmates' tea

Ely Insurance Committee

Ely High School prize distribution – first in enlarged schoolroom

1913 01 17

John Newstead Ely Indian mutiny veteran military funeral*,
Ely houses for working classes*,

1913 01 24

Bankruptcy court – Ebenezer Cornwall, Annesdale Ely builder

Ely nursing association report,

Ely dispensary 50th report

1913 01 31

The coroner reported he had already held three inquests occasioned by persons being killed by trains at the Mile End, Prickwillow crossing. The present mode of ringing of the bell on the gatekeeper's cottage as trains pass Shippea Hill station should continue and a red wooden arm, as on signals, should work automatically with the bell and be placed where it can be plainly seen by persons using the crossing. A similar system should apply when trains pass Ely northern signal-box – 13 01 31 p11 Mikado at Ely,

1913 07 02

Ely Chamber of Agriculture first dinner

1913 02 14

Ely land on New Barns Road suitable for building

1913 02 21

The Court heard that an agricultural labourer had been working for F.G. Coy at St John's Farm, Ely, when the steel hawser round the drum of the engine came off. Instead of putting it on with a crowbar, he used his hand, badly cutting it. He'd been awarded 9s a week under the Workmen's Compensation Fund. The hand had healed up and would get stronger with use. The farmer had offered him light work. But the man was in the Oddfellows and in receipt of sick pay for a year. If he took any work he would lose this. He was better off staying at home. The judge decided he could do some work and reduced his compensation payments to five shillings a week. 13 02 21 p11 CIP

1913 03 07

'The Bells of Ely' by Samuel Mann
Ely Ratepayers Association proposed

1913 03 24

Ely Militia barracks, hospital and 12 cottages on the north side Silver Street, Ely should be sold. With regard to the drill ground, eleven cottages, house & offices on the south side, let to Ely UDC, the front gardens may be used as a footpath as part of a street improvement. 13 03 24

1913 04 11

Bishop of Ely's car in accident 13 04 11

1913 04 19

Ely council elections

The enterprising Newmarket and District 'Bus Company plans a motor bus service for Soham on market days departing from the Crown Hotel at 12.30 on Tuesdays and arriving at Newmarket an hour later. On Thursdays they leave from the Market Square for Ely. The vehicles, supplied by the London General 'Bus Companies, present an exceedingly smart appearance, being painted yellow picked out with dark blue. They have electric light and are exceptionally quiet running. The company has already started a service of buses between Burwell and Newmarket, doing three journeys a day 13 04 18 p11

1913 04 25

Ely horse sale

1913 05 09

Ely diaries inspected *

1913 05 16

Close of campaign, East Cambs bye-election – rotten eggs at Waterside Ely

1913 06 06

County Borough Bill petition to Prime Minister – make new county with Ely at centre

1913 05 11

Ely railwaymen meeting

1913 07 18

Ely sanatoria treatment

1913 08 01

Ely railwaymen consider NUR union
Ely militia barracks sale cottages

1913 08 15

Ely fire Curries

1913 08 22

Jack Hulbert of Ely & Gonville & Caius, who made a 'hit' both in Cambridge and London in 'Cheer-Oh Cambridge' the musical comedy of his own construction, has been engaged by Mr Robert Courtneidge for the forthcoming production of his new musical play at the Shaftsbury Theatre. Miss Cicely Courtneidge (fresh from a holiday in South Africa) is another member of the notable company. 13 08 22 p5 CIP

1913 08 29

Ely council heard the Padnal Road was being made up with clunch but some of the gravel sent had been totally unsuitable and not inspected by the Surveyor. Parts of the road had not been rolled and there were ruts about nine inches deep, making it dangerous for motor and light traffic and likely to cause lameness for animals dragging a heavy load. This must now be removed adding to costs 13 08 29 p7 CIP

1913 08 29

Mr J. Fear of Waterside, Ely, complained of the filthy state of the old ditch opposite his workshop in Willow Walk. It was very bad indeed and his workpeople had complained very much about it. It was more than he could stand – it made him feel quite ill. The ditch was mainly used as a place to soak bundles of rods and for keeping a boat. It was entirely a matter for Mr Fear and Mr Scott.

1913 08 29

Ely cathedral fire protection scheme *

1913 09 19

Ely baby found in trunk

1913 10 03

A new Church Army mission van was dedicated, replacing one that had been on the road for 18 years. Called the Ely No.1 van, it bears the name 'Mary Ann' and is much more convenient for those who have to pass their lives in it. There is larger floor space with two bunks instead of three, giving greater comfort. Mounting the steps there is a hall which can be turned into a covered-in platform to address open-air meetings. The living part is cosy and comfortably furnished with a cooking range and a chest of drawers which opens to make a fair-size table. Folding chairs and cushions make it as home-like as possible. 13 10 03 p7 CIP

1913 10 24

Ely Cathedral St Etheldreda Festival
Ely Free Church Council demonstration
Ely baby in trunk, Pledger's shop

1913 11 21

It would be a disastrous thing if the buildings on the Militia Barracks on the north side of Silver Street, Ely, which cost £10,000 to build, were sold to individual citizens at scrap price. No one knew what the future was going to be: they may be needed again for military occupation. The barracks were in perfectly safe hands – Ely Urban Council. But this sale related to the hospital and cottages on the north side and had nothing to do with them, councillors heard. 13 11 21 p9 CIP

1913 11 28

National Service league proposes every man of sound physique legally liable for service in Territorial Force for home defence only – Ely men not doing their duty

1913 12 12

Ely council apply money build workmen's dwellings: 23 houses had been pulled down as unfit for human habitation but difficulties had arisen about getting proper accommodation for those displaced. Some were successful in getting other cottages, some when out of the district and others drifted into the workhouse. A site had been procured on New Barns Road for 16 cottages in two blocks of eight and the inquiry was held with a view to getting the money to pay for them. There were 303 houses that need substantial repairs which could not be done with the tenants in them 13 12 12 p5

1913 12 12

Ely ratepayers oppose plans by the Ely Gas and Light Company to be allowed to produce electricity. This would grant them a monopoly so far as lighting is concerned. The price of gas is already very high – more through the slot meters used in the homes of the working classes. In other towns where there is competition prices are lower. They had seen the evil of one company having a monopoly. The company directors did not want competition. Should the Council undertake to supply electricity. Mr Harlock had installed electricity privately and was now paying almost half what he had before. It would cost about £7,500 for the council to install an electricity plant in Ely, leading to a heavy outlay. They were stifling the Gas Company who were ready to put them right up-to-date in the matter of electric light 13 12 12 p11

1913 12 19

East Anglian shepherds new state district formed at Ely

1914-1919

There are more detailed indexes to stories appearing in the Ely Standard during the First World War; contact me for details

1914 01 16

Territorial recruiting week has seen the Cambridgeshire Regiment up to full strength proving patriotic feeling remains strong and true. The wave of enthusiasm is spreading with recruits coming forward in gratifying numbers in Ely, March and Soham, proving Fenmen are determined not to be outdone in sturdy patriotism by the men of Cambridge. March is experiencing a wonderful revival of military fervour; the numbers had sunk very low but now there is every prospect the Company will be brought up to full strength. – pic Col Louis Tebbutt & Capt H. Littledale, parade outside Gt St Mary's – 14 01 16 j,k,l

1914 02 06

Suffragette demonstrations Ely Cathedral & Holy Trinity Cambridge – 14 02 06o, p

1914 03 20

The Bishop of Ely received a deputation of Suffragettes at his Palace. They arrived in a 'Bell' bus, the door was promptly opened and they were ushered into one of the beautiful old rooms where his Lordship received them most courteously. They wished to protest against the forcible feeding of suffragette prisoners in Holloway. The public were unaware of the presence of the militant suffragettes and as it was raining hard, the streets were practically deserted. 14 03 20e

1914 03 27

Stallion Show. — The annual stallion show in connection with Cambs and Isle of Ely Agricultural Society was held in the Mews, Ely, yesterday. Entries were about the same as last year and the gate was a record one. The popular President of the Society (Mr. J. C. Denison-Pender, M.P.) attended and entertained officials to lunch at the Bell Hotel. The show compared very favourably with that last year as regards the quality of the horses. The Challenge Cup for the best stallion in the show was awarded to Messrs. Chivers and Son, of Histon, with "Sreeby Victor," and Mr. W. C. Enson's "Borough Forest Prince" (Saffron Walden) secured the reserve card - 1914 03 27 CIPof

1914 04 03

Ecclesiastical commissioners had leased Ely council land for building cottages on a 999 year lease

1914 07 10

Territorial drill hall, Ely rifle range no good

1914 07 17

Sir – do Ely tradesmen and licensed victuallers want to lose the fishermen? The state of the river on match day eclipsed all records for weeds. Fishing and boating was absolutely impossible. Men who had come over a hundred miles to fish their match could not do so and hundreds who would have stopped in the town cleared off disgusted. It is time something was done to get rid of the weeds, if we are to retain our visitors – Elian

1914 07 17

County Show.—The 51st annual show of the Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely Agricultural Society was held at Ely on Tuesday in glorious weather. This year's exhibition will certainly rank among the Society's successes, for not only were the entries well up to the average, but, thanks to the fine weather, the attendance was very satisfactory, whilst the quality of the exhibits was high. The show was held in a paddock just off the Littleport road, kindly placed at the disposal of the Society by Mr T. B. Granger. There was an unusually fine display of implements. So far as the entries were concerned there was a good average in the Shires and Hackneys, some of the classes being very strong. Quite a record was set up in the cattle section, the dairy cattle being an especially fine lot. In one class there were 19 entries, although in some of the others the numbers were not so satisfactory. After an interval of 12 years pigs were re-introduced, but probably owing to the fact not being very widely known, the entries were not so large as might have been expected. If the restrictions permit, the prizes will be continued another year, when it may be confidently anticipated the section will be better supported. The arrangements were admirably carried out, while the judging gave very general satisfaction – 1914 07 17 CIPof

1914 07 24

Ely Wanderers football club

1914 07 24

John Titterton, an artist, sportsman, photographer and antiquarian lived in Ely nearly 60 years. He became fascinated by astronomy. He was a successful photographer in the time of the wet plate process and it was pathetic to look through thousands of old negatives and realised how many Ely friends had passed away. He was a clever artist his famous picture 'The building of Ely Minster' and a racy and versatile writer. As a representative of the Press he wrote a great deal of copy relating to old Ely. His father, Governor of Peterborough Gaol and superintendent of rural police at Cambridge, had taken part in the Battle of Waterloo and rescued the Duke of Wellington when mobbed at Apsley House. 14 07 24

1914 07 31

Death of Mr. J. A. P. Titterton. We regret to record the death, which occurred after a long illness, of Mr. John Titterton, one of Ely's oldest and respected citizens. The deceased gentleman, who was 84 years of age, was the only son of the late Mr. John Titterton who was Governor of Peterborough Gaol and previously Chief Constable and Superintendent of the Rural Police at Cambridge, of which he was the organiser. An artist, sportsman, photographer, antiquarian and astronomer, the deceased went to Ely as a young man, residing there for nearly 60 years. He was assisted in scientific matters by Professor Selwyn. He became fascinated by astronomy and did good work under the Royal Astronomical Society in completing an entire series of photographs of the solar system. Mr. Titterton had also the reputation of being a clever artist, his oil and water colour paintings being much admired by all who viewed them. A well-known, and even famous picture, "The building of Ely Minster", was from his brush, and he also possessed several others of an historical character.

Gipsy Smith first meeting Ely as missionary

Ely barracks housing
Ely speed motors

1914 08 21

Boy scouts watch Ely water tower

Death Mrs Kempton, Ely

Ely & war – speeches, hospital work wounded

Personal – we are asked to deny the statement that Mr Knight, one of the most loyal residents of Soham, is a German. He served 17 years in the Volunteers and did 18 months' active service in the Boer War, for which he received a medal. Recently he has been on duty guarding the bridges at Ely during the night. Mr Knight is not the only resident concerning whom false statements have been made – 14 08 21 p2

Recruiting for the Second Army is going on well with centres set up at Cambridge Corn Exchange and the Prince Albert, Ely. The troops encamped in Cambridge appreciate the way patriotic men and women have welcomed them and ministered to their comforts. Every camp has a tent where tea and coffee, bread and cakes can be obtained with another for reading or writing letters. A post box is cleared every two hours and a stall set up selling envelopes and pencils. It is one of the finest camping grounds they have ever been upon and the large well-kept open spaces are well suited to their new use. 14 08 21 p5

1914 08 28

Ely Forehill Brewery emergency squad

W. Haylock, Ely death

1914 09 25

Ely sewage: road water was conveyed to river by separate channels and the bulk of the sewers converged into small settlement tanks at Common Muckhill and the tank effluent passed into the river without further treatment. They were in close proximity to the population and apart from river pollution considerable local nuisance was created, especially during the emptying operations. There were three district sewage outfalls into roadside dykes, creating considerable nuisance and it would be necessary to connect them to the man system and concentrated at one sewage purification works; this meant pumping. It was an abominable nuisance, *

Ely military muddle, scouts watch water tower – did not want two units in one county; although recruits wanted to come to Ely they could not be granted the use of the barracks; scouts aged 14 should not be allowed to do night duty at Water Tower

Fordham nursing association

Ely sergeant suicide barracks

Fisher brothers, Ely, are Germans, had returned Germany, should not vote

1914 10 16

Ely Belgian family arrives

1914 10 30

Ely bonfire fireworks banned

Ely fair – recruiting parties and sale of Belgian favours

1914 11 06

Ely Patriotic S.A.

Ely Countess Huntingdon church pastor leaves

Ely relief widows

1914 11 20

GER new railway – act to be sought; includes line crossing River Cam near Sawston, stopping up stream, Ely land

The Home Office has authorised the Isle of Ely Chief Constable to enrol up to 300 special constables, some of whom could carry and use firearms. He was to take 'certain actions' on the roads in consequence of the war; the nature of the obstructions to be utilised on the roads left to his discretion and he could obtain additional equipment as necessary. Payment was to be made for subsistence of Boy Scouts rendering assistance to the police. Ely Water Tower continues to be guarded, but what of the bridge – the water main runs across it
Erhmann supplied whisky to W.F. Wilkinson of Ely; but were they Germans as cannot trade with enemy; they could be imprisoned.

1914 11 27

Casualties –Simpkins Ely, Ely PC Chaney
Ely recruiting, Littleport Constitutional Hall patriotic songs*, Lt Downham

1914 12 04

Bishop's Health.—Regret at the indisposition of the Bishop of Ely (Dr. F. H. Chase) will be general (says Free Lance), and His Lordship now announces that he has been forbidden to undertake any public duties until after the end of the year. It will be remembered that he was taken ill at the conclusion of the first day's proceedings at the Ely Diocesan Conference, and was unable to attend on the second day. This proved to be a slight attack of appendicitis. The Bishop has had a very arduous year, the re-modelling of the diocese and other matters throwing an exceptionally heavy burden upon his shoulders. It is to be hoped the New Year will see him completely restored to health once more.

1914 12 11

Emergency committees have been appointed to act in concert with the military authorities in case of invasion. That for the Isle of Ely is headed by Mr C. Bidwell and includes Mr Luddington of Littleport, F. Harlock, of Ely A.E. Wright of Haddenham & Owen Ambrose of Stuntney. Their powers include the removal of livestock, vehicles and foodstuffs from the scene of operations and facilitating the passage of troops through the area. Every man should take his part in the struggle; if he is not employed in permanent work he should enlist or join the nearest Volunteer Corps; he will be provided with a badge and counted as a combatant though no arms, ammunition or clothing will be supplied. Anyone who declines to enlist must not take part in the defence of his country and in case of invasion must surrender any arms he has in his possession. He will be liable to duties such as digging trenches or burying the dead. The public should not carry arms on any account. This applies to some local gentlemen who have threatened to use arms in case of invasion: such steps would provoke reprisals on inhabitants and destruction of buildings.

1915 02 19

Cambridge new stationmaster, F. Randall of Ely – profile, photo – 15 02 19a

1915 09 03

Ely VTC men guarding bridges named

1915 09 10

Ely VTC appeal disappointing, wounded soldiers shown around cathedral
Jack Gibbins, Ely, started a drum and fife band in conjunction Wesleyan chapel when war broke out
Chatteris shops now closing 1-2pm for meal break
Ely workhouse should be insured against zeppelin attacks
Ely St Mary vicar, Punchard, retires
Casualties include Wayman, Ely

1915 09 17

Ely – some houses not black out windows

1915 09 24

Ely workman falls from new Co-op Society building Soham

Ely deserter – Underwood

Ely danger from zeppelin raids – lights should be extinguished early at the fair; edges of paths should be whitened to lesser dangers

1916 02 16

A fortunate escape. The fortunate escape of the Norwich and London express on Monday afternoon (says the writer of Town and County topics) when the engine was derailed after charging a fallen signal-post which obstructed the line near Ely, recalled the more serious accident to a similar train many years ago, through a balance weight falling in front of it from off the engine of a down express train. Then some passengers were very seriously injured and the train rendered almost a total wreck. The heavier engine which was drawing Monday's train, and the prompt action of the engine driver appear to have been the main causes of preventing a repetition of the distressing results of the earlier accident. Everybody may be congratulated that matters were not worse than they were.

1916 05 03

The Walbro sidecar screen, Walbro Motor Company, Ely – 16 05 03a

1914 04 04

Stallion Show.—There was quite a good entry for the Stallion Show of the County Agricultural Society, held at Ely on Thursday. Carlton What's Wanted, the shire hired by the Society for the season, carried off the Champion ribbon. Adbolton St. George, the property of Mr. H. C. Callaby, was the champion hackney, and the three-year-old class was won by Mr. G. E. Gittus' shire, Eaton Top Gallant.

1917 06 27

Little boy sent to prison,—At the usual meeting of the magistrates in Ely on Thursday, J. Cropley Esq., presiding, a little boy, about 8 years of age, was sent to prison for 14 days and to have a whipping for stealing some bread. It appears that his father, a very respectable tradesman, sent the boy for some bread, giving him some money. The boy, not seeing anyone in the shop, took the bread and kept the money, afterwards saying that he had meant to pay. Some persons may imagine that the whipping and one day's imprisonment for child of such tender years would have been sufficient; others may have a contrary opinion.

1917 07 18

Burning Fatality at Ely,—A shocking affair occurred in the early hours of July 4th at Ely, when Mrs. Jemima Chapman, aged 80, was burnt to death in her bedroom'. The old lady who lived at Bohemond Street, was an old-age pensioner. Miss F. Chapman, deceased's daughter said she slept with her mother. On the night in question, she woke up to find the room in flames, and rushed downstairs to get palls of water. She thought deceased must have knocked the lamp over. They were in the habit of burning a light all night

1917 11 28

Canonry, — We are very pleased to notice that the Honorary Canonry in Ely Cathedral, vacated by the death of the Rev. Professor Swete has been conferred by the Lord Bishop of the Diocese on the Rector of Little Wilbraham, the Rev. Dr. Stokes, until recently Vicar of St. Paul's, Cambridge. It is an honour richly deserved, for few clergy have worked harder or more indefatigably in the diocese of Ely than the recipient

1919 02 12

Widow of Former Lord Lieutenant.—The death took place rather suddenly at her residence, St. Mary's Court, Ely, on Tuesday last at the ripe old age of 89 years of Mrs. C. W. Townley, widow of Mr. Charles Watson Townley, M.A. for nearly 20 years Lord Lieutenant, and Custos Rotulorum of Cambridgeshire. Mrs. Townley resided with her husband at Fulbourn Manor till his death in 1893, and remained there for several years afterwards, but she has spent the last ten years of her life at Ely.

We understand that she was out and about right up to within a few days of her decease, and only on the previous Sunday was present at divine service at Ely Cathedral.

1919 02 26

Serious Floods.—Not for many years has the County of Cambridge been visited by floods of such magnitude or of so serious a nature as those experienced within the last ten days. Thousands of acres are under water, and at Cambridge the water rose at one time to within six inches of the height reached by the memorable flood of 1879. At Ely the river touched a depth beyond any previously attained within the memory of the oldest inhabitants. It is good news to hear that since Sunday the water has been steadily falling. A serious break in the river bank midway between Waterbeach and Upware last Wednesday resulted in the disastrous flooding of hundreds of acres of low-lying land in the vicinity, the temporary isolation of several farms and cottages and considerable damage to stacks. On Tuesday night ... above the banks at Waterbeach Fen where the break in the river bank occurred, and farmers took prompt steps to remove their stock to safety, but on Wednesday morning a break occurred, and the breach rapidly becoming wider, the water poured through. Farm buildings and cottages were surrounded, and the inhabitants in some cases were forced to seek shelter in the village. All Wednesday farm workers and other helpers from Waterbeach and district worked up to their knees in water, but the gap widened, and it was found necessary to sink two barges in the breach. Thousands of sandbags were requisitioned and by this means the hole was filled and the inflow of water at this spot checked. Men have been employed night and day in "cradging" along the banks and strengthening the places where any water was found overflowing, this also being done on the Stretham bank of the Old West

1920 03 17

Photographic Club exhibition, printed by H.R. Champion of Ely & W.C. Squires – bromoil; colour transparencies by F.J. Stoakley – 20 03 17d

1920 03 22

Club for ex-servicemen as war memorial at Ely rejected, suggest library

1920 06 03

Pritchard Rayner estate sold at Ely – 72 lots including Adelaide farm, baker's shop in St Mary's Street, land Cawdle Fen, Padnal, West Fen, Waterloo House, Grunty Fen

1920 08 19

Ely railway fatality, Cambridge man killed

1920 08 25

Accident at Ely station, painter working in engine sheds killed by train – 20 08 25

1920 09 23

Ely Hockey Club formed

1920 10 06

Pledger hat maker from Ely accused of profiteering

1920 10 12

Ely housing scheme, Minister says 200 houses should be pushed forward

1920 11 19

Ely Militia Barracks would be useful to accommodate military force; if put up for auction would be sold for a mere song and the ground used either for allotments or for building cottages.

1920 12 07

Landlord of Ship Inn Ely drowned, twice wounded during war, saw soldiers that had been killed

1921 08 17

Sepulchral monuments in Ely Cathedral – feature – 21 08 17b

1922 03 10

A suggestion made by the Postmaster of Ely (Mr T.W. Bird) to dispense with the evening mail deliveries on Saturdays in order to provide a half-day holiday for the postmen did not find favour with the Ely Urban District Council. Mr Bird wrote asking the Council's sanction to the suspension of the 5.15 pm delivery, and mentioned that it was being done in many towns. He added that the particular delivery was quite an unimportant one for the articles for delivery were few. Mr C.H. Trimmer considered it was the wrong delivery to take off, as there was no delivery on Sunday. Rev T.J. Kirkland thought the week-end posts were in a "dreadful" state now and deliveries were most uncertain. He thought they could hardly agree with the suggestion unless the Sunday morning be reinstated. The Council agreed.

1922 03 21

Motor wheel spokes and pieces of lamp glass and rubber from an inner tube which was burst littered in profusion about the Lynn-road Ely as the result of a Ford car coming into collision with a steam lorry. The near side front wheel of the lorry crashed almost broad side on into the motor's off-side front wheel which it splintered beyond repair. So badly wrecked was the front of the car that it took mechanics about two hours to lift it sufficiently to get it away. The car is not insured.

1922 05 05

Fully described as "Ely's Own Memorial to Her Own Fallen Heroes" - the shrine containing the Rolls of Honour of 224 men of the Ely Urban District who paid the great price in the war – was unveiled on Sunday afternoon in the presence of an attendance numbering several thousands. By a happy choice the shrine is located on the Market-hill, in the heart of the city, and on the spot made sacred by its association with a temporary wooden shrine, which was placed there during the war

1922 05 12

"To the glory of God, and in thankful memory of the men of --- who gave their lives in the Great War". How often have these sad dedicatory words been spoken during the past year or two as each local memorial was unveiled? But never have they been uttered with such deep impressiveness and in an air so charged with beautiful meaning as when they were spoken by the Bishop of Ely in Ely Cathedral this afternoon. For the veneration bestowed on each individual memorial was collected and concentrated on the beautiful memorials which have been erected in the Cathedral to the memory of the 5,320 men who made the supreme sacrifice in defence of their country's honour

1922 06 14

The "pros and cons" of a proposed joint water scheme were reviewed at a public inquiry convened by the Ministry of Health held at Ely. Mr H.J. Martin explained that for the most part the inhabitants of Littleport drank water from the River Ouse. Mr A.K. Campbell put in an analyst's report to the effect that water from the Ouse taken four miles south of Littleport was polluted with sewage and was unfit for drinking purposes. Mr T. Peake: "I would like to remind you that Ely City empties its sewage into the waters which Littleport has to drink; also that last year the rivers were absolutely unfit for drinking purposes - they were stagnant and putrid". A feature of the enquiry was the stout opposition put up by the parishes of Haddenham, Wilburton, Stretham and Little Downham. A solitary supporter from Stretham explained that he did not attend a public meeting there - which was unanimous against the scheme - because had he done so he would probably have been "crucified"

1897

The ancient city of Ely is greatly favoured in the variety of country rambles which one may enjoy across fields etc. This morning a chum and myself, whilst indulging in one of these old walks - not

much frequented now - from the junction of Kettlesworth and Clayway Drovers to New Barnes, were astonished to find about midway across the first field, that a fence had been erected, along the top of which was stretched a barbed (or barbarous) wire. We saw two labourers who said "There's a new chap got this 'ere land, and he thinks he's going to stop the path, but he can't. I should go on if I were you" – letter

1922 08 23

Shall the Ely Urban Council obtain powers to kill rats or not? That was the crux of a resolution proposed at the meeting on Monday. The Rev T.J. Kirkland raised the position regarding the Mill Pits and the nuisance caused by the shooting of objectionable rubbish there and the consequent presence of rats. The danger of the evil was not generally realised. For instance, a rat chart of England showed that in the worst areas cancer was more prevalent than in others; also rats damaged crops and properties and were also a great danger to health as disease carriers. The chairman said it was not enough for one local authority to take it up and the other to leave it alone, while the Isle Committee did their utmost, West Suffolk did nothing and all the Isle rats bolted into Suffolk for the time being. (Laughter).

1922 09 21

For the second time the incinerator proposed to be erected by the Ely Urban District Council for the destruction of the city's refuse gave rise to a debate, in which opinion was rather sharply divided. Originally the subject arose out of the nuisance caused through the dumping of rubbish at the Mill Pits and the rates which were attracted there by it

1922 09 21

At a meeting of Ely water-supply committee Mr Laxton raised the question of putting water meters into all gardens in which hose pipes or sprinklers were used. His contention was that the water used should be paid for and the only way of ensuring that was by putting a meter in. Sometimes people went to bed and forgot that the water was left running

1922 09 21

At Ely Urban District Council the advisability of disposing of the Nutholt Close for the purposes of dwelling-houses was considered. They had a programme for 200 houses but of these 20 were erected in Ely and 8 at Stuntney - a meagre quantity. The chairman commented; "Some of the tenders for the houses to be erected on the Prickwillow site are ridiculous". Prices per pair ranged from F. Tucker of Ely at £400, whilst F. Ambrose quoted £750, Hobbs & son of Downham £906.10s.2d and F.W. Edwards of Prickwillow £1,500. A list of houses in Prickwillow to which water was supplied from the new main was laid before the meeting. The committee recommended that in all cases where there was not a sufficient supply of wholesome water on the premises that notices be served to make the necessary connections in order to obtain a supply

1922 10 25

The motorist has never been regarded very kindly by the general public. Those who do not envy him his means of locomotion regard him as a sort of danger and annoyance. While they resent the clouds of dust, the smell of petrol, and the speed with which the motorist flashes by, they recognise that motoring is an evil to which they may, in some prosperous future, themselves be attracted. The speaker remarked on the continual procession of cars passing through Ely on Sunday between seven and eight a.m. en route from that haven of rest - Hunstanton. They usually returned from it more tired than if they had spent the day quietly in their own home

1922 12 14

As the result of negotiation the bulk of the Ely barracks has been acquired by Ely Urban District Council for the sum of £2,750. The property comprises three cottages in Silver Street, eight cottages in Parade-lane, Surveyor's office, stables, post mortem room and mortuary, armoury, Quartermasters Stores, adjutant's house, parade ground and drill shed.

1923 03 21

At Ely Urban Council the chairman reminded them that the question of a new sewage scheme had been before the Council for a very long time; it went back for 20 or 25 years. It had always been recognised that the existing scheme was antiquated, out of date, and always gave a great deal of trouble. During periods of storm clouds, the drains were blocked up, and were unequal to carrying away the storm water, cellars were flooded, and a great deal of inconvenience was caused generally. The disposal of sewage was certainly very unsatisfactory. The sewage tank was emptied twice a year, and it was not regarded as a satisfactory way of dealing with it. By the new scheme it would be remedied, and, moreover, the river would not be polluted as it was at present.

1923 04 14

The question of artificial wreaths came again under serious consideration at the quarterly meeting of the Ely burial board. The Clerk explained the board's position regarding its powers relatives to artificial wreaths and grave markers. The matter arose out of the application by a family to place upon the grave a small marble heart shaped as a token of respect. The Clarke said that in the town from whence the application came, Sheringham, it was customary to allow artificial wreaths, and he expressed the opinion that artificial wreaths were very liable to crack, get out of order, tumble to pieces, and become very unsightly.

1923 07 12

Mr Cutlack told Ely council that he was of the opinion that the best and most economical course to take in the event of a smallpox outbreak would be to erect a marquee or tents in an outlying area for patients. In the wintertime provision could be made for heating the tents. Mr J C Laxton said in weather like they were then experiencing he could not agree. It would mean frying the patients and getting them ready for somewhere else. (Laughter)

1923 07 12

A most successful function in every way was the first annual dinner of the Ely City military band. The Chairman said that for years before the formation of the City Band, the only band they had was the Cambridgeshire militia band. Of course there was the Volunteer band but that, unfortunately broke up. Thus it was greatly to the advantage of the town that they had been able to form such an excellent band in Ely as they had now. That was a thing that every citizen in Ely could congratulate himself on.

1923 07 16

The annual meeting of the Royal Eastern Counties Institution for the Mentally Defective, Colchester, was held at the Memorial hall Newmarket. The chairman said they had six patients in the institution from Newmarket and the neighbourhood, and these cases were costing to maintain about £150 more every year than was received in subscriptions from Newmarket and district. One had been in since 1902, another since 1905 and another since 1914. Mr Cole said they should bear in mind that Newmarket was only a small town, although some people called it a gold mine, and if they compared it with some of the other towns they would see that Newmarket subscriptions were very creditable. Ely they looked upon as a sort of heaven but the good people of Ely only gave £70, while the bad town of Newmarket gave twice as much.

1923 07 28

There are new pleasures in store for workhouse inmates. Amazed and almost disbelieving that the music and songs were being heard from "Lonnon" the inmates of the Ely Union were given a wireless concert by Mr Charles Howes. Two receiving sets were used, one to operate the loudspeaker, and the other to make the music audible in the headphones. Two aerials were erected, one outside and the other slung across the dining room where the concert was given. During the evening the London broadcasting station mentioned Ely, and said they hoped the concert would be received well at the Tower House, and that it would be enjoyed by those who were listening in for the first time. That the hope was realised, goes without saying

1923 08 21

Mr James Tuck of Ely has been struck by lightning twice, once in 1914 and again on Saturday. In 1914 he was putting hay into an elevator at Chettisham when there was a vivid flash of lightning. The fork he was holding was torn from his hands. The lightning scorched his face and left red marks on his arm of a zig-zag shape. When he recovered doctors were astonished. On Saturday he was driving some pigs. Suddenly there was a vivid flash of lightning and he was stuck to the ground in a dazed condition. With the exception of still having a headache he is now little worse for his experience

1923 08 29

Ely Council received a letter from L.N.E.R. Company asking if they were prepared to consider the question of developing Ely as a tourist centre. They had outlined the cost of an advertising scheme as follows: pictorial poster, (300) to cover two years, £90; guide book, mostly paid by local advertising, £50; newspaper advertisements according to means available. A sum of £250 would give very good publicity to Ely. Mr Burrows said that anything that would tend to popularise Ely and attract people to the town should be done if practicable. There were several people who would be willing to pay through the rates for the popularisation of Ely.

1923 09 13

Ely's water tower has gone dry and the whole of the interior is under renovation, drained of every drop of its 330,000 gallons of water, which is a day and a half's supply for Ely City. Water is drawn from the river Ouse into a filter bed, where it is pumped by a steam engine through 1,400 yards of pipes into the tank. The number of bricks in the tower is estimated to be 618,000 the first of which was made by the Dean of Ely in 1854. The wisdom of the Dean showed itself in laying the first brick, and not the last, which is 140 feet above the level of the Ouse

1923

Ely Urban Council was told that the death rate in the principal places had been much higher than that in the villages. Mr Laxton said "That is because they drink dyke water in the villages". (Laughter). The chairman said 104 fatal cases of cancer had been reported. He thought if anything could be brought to light as to the prevention of this dreadful disease was concerned, it should be done. Two matters that needed attention were the bad sewerage and bad housing. There were 146 houses in the district not fit for habitation.

1923 12 18

Ely council considered a scheme for electric lighting. The cost of the plant would be £10,500 and would consist of two 100-kilowatt diesel engines, driven direct current generators, controlling switchboard and distribution panels. The cost of wiring Ely would be £500 as they had 10 miles to cover. A battery of accumulators would mean that at night when the engine stopped there would be current if you switched on

1924 01 11

Ely houses – dust, p3 *

1924 01 12

Ely Urban District Council proposed to erect 10 houses at Prickwillow, where they were most urgently needed and 20 at Chief's Lane, Ely. The question arose as to the distance the houses would be set back from the road, taking into consideration the dust. Mr Laxton said tenants would rather have less front garden and more back to grow "taties".

1924 01 17

Isle of Ely County Council are prepared to declare the road from Ely to Prickwillow and thence to Mile End drove and Mildenhall road a main road, subject to certain improvements including the abolition of the tolls collected at Prickwillow by the Burnt Fen and Middle Fen commissioners. The tolls being discontinued it was resolved that the toll gates at Prickwillow be taken by the Superintendent and notices as to the collection of tolls be removed from the toll house.

1924 01 19

Nearly 100 inmates of the Ely workhouse were entertained with a dinner. The chief course was good English rabbits, served up in very appetising fashion, mashed potatoes, plum pudding, beer and minerals. Finally a flashlight photograph was taken, much to the astonishment and delight of some of the aged inmates.

1924 01 25

Ely water charges, p5

1924 02 18c

A meeting took place at Ely for the purpose of forming an Ely branch of the National Farmers Union. Mr Street Porter said a branch existed at Haddenham and if one was formed for Ely it would be much more convenient for his district. There were four others in the Isle of Ely – March, Wisbech, Chatteris and Whittlesey. There would be no doubt that members would derive benefits from it.

1924 03 29c

A fire broke out at the old brewery of Mrs A and B Hall, Waterside, Ely. The building involved was the painters shop in close proximity to other old buildings. There was a large consignment of paint and inflammable materials inside at the time most of which were destroyed. If the fire had occurred in the night, there might have been a serious disaster

1924 04 08c

At Ely council Colonel Archer proposed the provision of non-parlour cottages with three bedrooms. Some might say a working man was entitled to his parlour. Unfortunately it was quite impossible for farm labourers to pay eight shillings a week in rent. If the council built cottages having two living rooms the tenants would use one in which to cook and to live and keep the other one “tidy. “

1924 05 17c

A Belgian balloonist came down at Ely in a pond ten feet deep. He was taking part in a big race from Brussels for a £2,000 prize. He crossed the Channel during the night and had a very rough journey. His balloon is said to be the smallest in existence and the pilot had to stand all the time he was in the air. It came down at Norney farm and was pulled out by Mr Herbert Cross, an Ely farmer.

1924 06 17c

There was a large meetings of Ely ratepayers when the proposed electricity schemes were under consideration. It would be possible to use a 30-watt lamp for 22 hours for a penny. All-electric cooking resulted in an average consumption of 360 units per head per annum, the cost being approximately £2.5s. for each person. If a public bath could be erected adjacent to the electricity works, the exhaust heat from the engine could be very economically utilised and be ample to cover the utmost requirements of the baths

1924 06 25c

A meeting of Ely ratepayers to consider the proposed scheme of electricity was told that in some towns the Electricity Company made a practice of putting in a light into a small cottage where it would not be possible for the tenant to pay the current rate. The light was put in the living room at a standard rate of £1 per year. It meant that every house had a light and used it because it was cheaper than oil lamps. The engineer said the rate was 6d per week per 30 watt lamp.

1924 07 06c

Ely magistrates were occupied for some considerable time when an assault alleged to have taken place on a train came before them. The complainant, a poultry dealer, said he entered the restaurant car and asked for salmon. The attendant came back and said “The chef says you cannot have the salmon, as we may eat it for dinner”. He was offered Welsh rarebit but did not know what that meant. This seemed to annoy the steward who struck him under the chin. Another poultry dealer said that some of the waiters were saucy sometimes, but she always put them in their place.

1924 08 03c

Ely Urban councillors reported they had inspected 18 cottages in Bray's land & Newnham Street. In every house they found that the windows fitted badly, let in rain, and were very draughty. The tenants complained that they were unable to keep their goods in the larders, owing to the windows being fitted with perforated zinc, that let in the dust. A letter was read, signed by 19 of the tenants, relative to a reduction of rents which were 9s a week for the parlour type and 7s per week for the non-parlour type

1924 08 27c

The Ely Urban District surveyor reported he was called by Atkin, the sewerman, who said that the flap at the sewage works had been let down by boys and that the whole of the town sewage was being held up along the low level. It was impossible to open the flap against the water and he had an opening or grip cut across the river bank from the main sewers in the grass yard, to let the water escape into the river. There were four inches of sewage and water in the bottom rooms of some of the houses. He also reported that the conveniences on the market place were completed satisfactorily and the keys were in his possession

1924 08 30c

Concerning the parking of motor cars on Ely Market Hill at night the police have no objection provided no obstruction was caused. On rare occasions a large lorry or two came into the town late at night and was placed by the side of the Corn Exchange. They always left early next morning. In the case of all cars and other vehicles left on the hill, which were likely to be a danger to pedestrians the drivers were requested to move them at once.

1924 09 17c

The installation of the first apple grading and packing station in Ely, which has not been completed at Cottenham, should prove a great boon to local fruit growers. It is rather unfortunate that the apple crop is so light this year but it is confidently expected enough apples will be produced to give the venture a good start. Each grower's apples will be graded separately and the one with the largest percentage of first grade will receive the best price. The impression that appears to exist that all growers would receive the same price, independent of grade, is entirely erroneous.

1924 09 24c

Plans for the erection of a wharf to the proposed sugar beet factory on the river near the Queen Adelaide Bridge at Ely were agreed. A second request was to fill up the disused Roswell Pits with the mud that settled out of the water with which the sugar beet would be washed. Instead of useless pits they would one day have some very good garden ground.

1924 10 06c

Dr Davis made an appeal in aid of the Ely Red Cross Massage Clinic, an institution to provide the poor with the benefits of massage and medical electricity. It had been found difficult for patients to attend Addenbrooke's Hospital for treatment and for the staff there to administer treatment owing to the ever increasing number of outpatients. It also saved time and expense and, in the case of a fracture or dislocation to the leg, a patient would have to forgo treatment altogether if it was not for this local institution. The clinic had had numerous cases of accidents and relied solely on local charity for its upkeep

1924 12 14c

Mr C. Phillips was born in Victoria Street Ely and started to work on the railway as an engine cleaner at Peterborough in 1876. Last year when rounding a bend near Ely, he saw one of the crossing gates left shut across the line. Unable to arrest the progress of his locomotive he crashed through the gate, part of which hung on the buffer, the other part being flung through the gateman's front window. A piece broke the Westinghouse brake pipe on the engine and caused the brakes to act. Nothing daunted Mr Phillips set to work to repair the damage, placing a penny in to stop the leakage and in five minutes the train was under way again

1924 12 17c

At Ely council the clerk read a letter asking that in view of the fatal drowning accident they should minimise the grave danger to the public through there being no warning notices that the continuance of Forehill to Waterside leads to the river. There were a lot of strangers who, when descending Forehill mistook it for Back Hill and kept straight on, instead of turning into Broad street. A car stopped on the edge of the river recently. He suggested a lamp with ruby glass and white letters bearing the words "Stop! Danger. The River"

1924 12 22c

A serious outbreak of fire occurred at the workshops of Mr Frank Morris, builder and carpenter, of West End, Ely. The Ely City Fire Brigade under Lieut-Col G.L. Archer, immediately rushed to the scene. The wind was now conveying flames towards houses, some being of thatched roofs, but bands of willing helpers took up their positions on ladders, while others rushed along with buckets of water to pour on the outbuildings and thus stop the fire from spreading. The yard was a scene of destruction, some of the workmen searched for their tools but could only find a few that were burnt and twisted almost out of recognition.

1925 03 31

The manager of the Co-operative Society, Ely, told the court he had missed small sums of money from the employee's leather cash bags, which had been hung up in the office for the men to give customers change. The police gave him two bags containing marked coins – two single shillings, four sixpences and twelve pennies, which he hung up in the cashier's office, then locked up and left the premises. Police kept watch and saw defendant climb over a fence at the rear. A few moments later he returned. He was arrested and found to have the marked coins

1925 04 08

A general meeting was held with the object of forming a bowling club for the city of Ely. They had one club in the city, but being a political club, it debarred some from playing the ancient game of bowls. They had had a green offered to them by the Sports Association on the Paradise Recreation Ground, near the position where the winning post was placed on sports' day. Part of the green lay on the cycle track. The turf was the best in Ely.

1925 05 12

Great success marked the Jubilee celebrations at Ely of the founding of the Girls Friendly Society, over 1,400 members and associates from all parts of the dioceses attending a festival and thanksgiving service in the cathedral. A picturesque scene was presented when the procession with their magnificent banners and emblems passed from the Palace Green to the cathedral. The catering of Mr Vernon Cross of Ye Olde Tea Rooms, Forehill, was excellent.

1925 05 08

Alleged indecent attacks on young girls in Ely have caused considerable alarm. Twice police were within an ace of capturing the individual but the man escaped. They finally accomplished the arrest by a clever ruse. Mrs Hillier, wife of a police constable went out into the darkness on her mission to save young girls from being molested. Without any warning a man attacked her, a struggle ensued and she blew a police whistle, pursuing him as he tried to escape down the street. Police sergeant Newell was in the near vicinity and the man was caught. Mrs Hillier was congratulated upon her plucky act in the interests of justice.

1925 05 25

Alimond Denson, of Broad Street, Ely, applied for possession of a cottage next door to his house. He lived with his mother, father and two sisters who carried out a tailoring business at the same premises. There was one large room downstairs. One part was used for his photography work where the public went to have photos taken, while the other was used as a fitting room by his sisters. Upstairs there were two rooms and a box room. There was only one old lady living in the cottage that contained

eight rooms. She had not paid the rent. They had offered her a house down an alley and said she could serve cups of tea over the fence to the footballers.

1925 06 27

A somewhat alarming rumour as to four men engaged in harvest work in West Fen, Ely, having been poisoned after drinking beer, has gained ground in the last day or two. It appears they were working in a field and had stopped for refreshments. Each drank some beer from a bottle, which evidently had previously contained paraffin oil. Afterwards the men complained of pains in the stomach. Three recovered sufficiently from the attack to proceed with their work but the fourth was not so fortunate and medical attention had to be obtained.

1925 07 25

Rumours were afloat in Ely that the whole of the employees at the Beet Sugar Factory were out on strike. The trouble was in fact only in the carpenters' section. Some had been working as many as 100 hours per week & bearing in mind that such a lengthy period of employment was detrimental to the men's health officials had decided to limit the maximum number of hours to 56 and employ more men. This led to unrest among the carpenters 180 of whom "downed tools"

1925 07 21

An accident of a very serious nature occurred at Ely Sugar Beet Factory. A man named White was near the railway line when the dinner bell rang. A general rush is made by the workers for their various meal places and it is thought the man had left some of his tools on the permanent way. Shunting was taking place but he thought he could get his tools in time. However he fell with the result that one of the engine wheels passed over his leg.

1925 08 12

Ely was nearly dry from noon on Monday to 11am Tuesday owing to the city's water supply from Isleham having been held up through the bursting of a main at Stuntney, where water spouted two feet into the air. Residents were warned by Mr R. Wayman, the city's blind crier, that water should be used carefully. The lower part of Ely was more fortunate as the reservoir on Cambridge Road contained 80,000 gallons. This was run off at slow pressure and they were kept supplied until about 7 pm.

1925 08 12

Ely wants a pied piper. For weeks past allotment holders in Barton Fields have been missing produce such as peas & broad beans and have attributed the blame to two-legged thieves. But much 'stolen' produce was found stored between a rhubarb bed & a rubbish heap, where a big rat was acting as sentry. In the evening an army of rats of all sizes was seen to emerge from an adjacent ditch & begin to remove their plunder to a spare 'storehouse'. One horticulturist says they leave tracks which are so distinct one would think that sheep had been making their way over the plots.

1925 08 27

Such good progress has been made since activities first commenced in October last that it is expected that the Ely Beet Sugar Factory will be fully erected and equipped within the next four weeks or so. The whole frontage of the river has been concreted and unloading berths provided for 30 barges. There are farmers situated several miles from a railway station but near the river and the Factory Company are having their own fleet of steel barges which will be towed by tugs propelled by oil engines. Two overhead cranes, worked by electrical power, can be run along the quayside and used to empty the barges.

1925 10 16

The Ely Beet Sugar Factory was officially opened by the Minister of Agriculture. It is about a year since activities in connection with the erection of the factory commenced. Gradually large tracts of arable and pasture land have disappeared beneath the industry of the contractors and today there are well over two acres of buildings on a site of 66 acres. The average number of men employed in

building operations had been nearly 1,000 and the wages bill alone had amounted to £100,000. During the factory campaign now commencing they would employ about 500 men.

1925 11 19

Major D.J. Fryer, prospective candidate for the Isle of Ely, speaking at a Labour meeting held in the Ely Co-operative Hall, said he was so ashamed at Mr Winston Churchill's reduction of the super-tax and income tax that he gave £123, which he was saved from paying, to the Shepreth strikers. It was nonsense, he remarked, to pretend such men as himself needed relief. The Government should start at the other end of the scale.

1926 01 08

Ely and low-lying parts have luckily escaped any serious encroachment from the flood waters passing down the River Ouse. On Monday the river reached it's highest at 16 ft 9 ins, the normal being 13 ft 6 ins. Denver sluice was a godsend, for had it not been for the fine manipulation of those sluices another two to three feet would have been recorded at Ely. Along the 100 ft Bank however and between the Old and New Bedfords, the flood water stretches for at least 20 miles. Many parts around have suffered, but no serious damage is reported.

1926 01 18

The spectacle of a heavily laden steam waggon careering backwards down Fore Hill, Ely, was witnessed by a large number of people. The waggon, owned by Messrs Clark and Butcher of Soham was conveying a large quantity of flour and the driver was unaware that as it was freezing the road surface resembled a sheet of uneven glass. All went well until the waggon had reached the top of the hill but then although the rear wheels were revolving they were not 'biting' the surface of the road. It came to a stop and began to slip back. It gathered momentum and presented a curious sight, the rear wheels revolving in the opposite direction but with no effect. Sliding past Ye Olde Tea Rooms it skidded along the pavement and came to a stop a few yards past the Rose and Crown.

1926 02 10

A railway accident occurred near Ely station. The 9.41 pm slow passenger train for Cambridge was proceeding to what is known as the branch up-road platform of the station, to get on to the main line. At the Dock junction the engine collided with the side of another engine which was drawing a goods train at a slow pace, bound for London. Both engines were of the large type and the impact resulted in the engines and a number of trucks and carriages being derailed. Fortunately there were only a few people in the passenger train – only five or six and no one received anything worse than a shaking.

1926 06 10

A large bus belonging to Messrs Bowyer and Topper of Ely was returning from the Soham Grammar School sports, and was filled with Ely citizens, mostly ladies. Some distance from Stuntney a motor lorry, proceeding in the same direction, made an attempt to pass. The bus driver pulled off to the left but the lorry drove too close, knocking the hub of one of the wheels off. The bus turned to the left and rushed into the dyke, falling on to its left side with its radiator embedded in the bank. The occupants were in a serious plight with seats collapsing and broken glass flying about in all directions. Most of the ladies suffered from shock and it will be some time before they will recover from it

1926 07 07

Ely Burial Board received a letter to say that the Privy Council had passed an order closing Stuntney churchyard. Its care and maintenance transferred to the Parochial Church Council who could recover the cost from the overseers. But they thought that as the Burial Board was used to the work they would ask them to undertake it. It could be done by those who did the work at the cemetery. This was agreed. The renovation of the cemetery was being proceeded with satisfactorily.

1926 07 15

The citizens of Ely were all excitement when it was learned that a big bullock had run amok. The animal was being driven near Forehill when owing to the intense heat the animal began to act in a dangerous manner. The owner dropped to the ground, letting the animal rush madly over him. In Lynn Road the bull put its head through the window of the George and Dragon; it hesitated at the Electric Cinema where they were showing the "Rodeo". One gentleman who had hunted buffaloes in America took to his heels. Various men were now after the animal which was finally landed into a field in the Downham Road.

1926 09 09

Ely Councillors discussed government regulations requiring every cowkeeper or purveyor of milk to be registered and all who keep cows must have cement floors. It means that the cows kept on fen farms, to employ labour, would have to be sold. A man would not be able to keep his own cow in his own yard or sell his own milk. It appeared a lot of tomfoolery and was helping the foreigner instead of those at home. It was agreed to protest against the order.

1926 09 24

A young man in Newnham Street, Ely, was digging sand from a pit and was using his pickaxe somewhat freely, when he struck a human skull. A further removal of the earth revealed the whole skeleton; around it was found very ancient pieces of pottery. Many years ago an old public house with the sign of The Cherry Tree stood on the spot and it was an occasional rule to have a "dust up" before some rowdy parties broke up at night-time, but the skull showed no marks of violence, except where the pick had come into contact with it. The remains were collected and carefully reburied.

1926 12 03

Ely Guardians heard a complaint from a vagrant of a shortage of accommodation in the casual ward of the workhouse which was full up with Beet Sugar Factory employees who paid 1s per night. There was no registered common lodging house in Ely but the workhouse was for destitute people and not for those with money in their pockets. But some of them concealed what money they had. If they filled the casual wards with people with money what were they going to do with the poor chaps who really were down and out? Some of the casuals were looking for work. If the Beet Factory did not take them on they would only go on the land and take jobs from agricultural labourers. Last year there were 60 or 70 living at the Jam Factory. The matter was left to the discretion of the Master

1926 12 08

Ely ratepayers association discussed traffic in the streets which is becoming absolutely dangerous. One-way traffic was not nearly so necessary as in towns such as Cambridge and there would be opposition. It would be very difficult to manage. The best way was to have special parking places for the buses where they could drop off passengers. The problem would be solved if buses were parked in the Palace Green. There have been as many as 25 different vehicles in Market Street and 14 cars in the Cattle Market. Mr Rickwood said the trouble was from people putting their carts in the main streets; they were often left outside public houses from 10 am to 4 pm and in Brays Lane it was nearly impossible to pass.

1926 12 17

"Daisy Lee" was summoned for professing to tell fortunes to the wife of P.S. Hillier of Ely constabulary. She made a picturesque figure in court and said she was a member of the old and well-known family of Gypsy Lee. She was born in a caravan and called a gypsy. She carried on a business as a "character reader" and had stood in Ely Market Place often on market days without any complaint being made. Mrs Hillier said he had visited Lee's caravan at St John's Farm, Ely, had handed over a half-crown and been told to make a lucky wish. The gypsy then told her she had had a lot of worry and trouble – which was not true – and that she had a very good husband. The Bench fined Lee £10 and 10s costs and said she "must consider herself lucky they had not given her three month's hard labour". The money was paid forthwith

1926 12 22

Colonel Archer told Ely council that the congested state of the streets on market days was growing serious because of the large number of buses. Brays Lane had to take a very large share of the traffic because it was a short cut to the Beet Sugar Factory and was dangerous. The Chief Constable said there were three kinds of vehicles: the farmers' carts, the private cars and the motor 'buses. He did not think they could compel the farmer to put his cart some distance from where his horse was. They did not want to drive trade away. The only solution was there must be no parking of private cars other than in places specially allotted to them; the council must decide where these should be. All setting-down and taking up of bus passengers should occur between the junction of Lynn Road and Market Street and the Sun public house.

1927 03 04

The Ely Medical Officer said an epidemic of influenza had started on the male side of the infirmary with no means of isolating the cases. There were 30 cases in the male sick ward, six inmates in the House who could not be admitted to wards for lack of accommodation and two nurses on the House staff. In addition they were asked to take in nine cases of influenza from outside on one day. The closing of the female side of the infirmary to visitors, except in cases of extreme illness, had delayed the spread of infection for some weeks, but it had now broken out on that side too. There were 12 deaths in the infirmary, three directly due to influenza

1927 03 22

The Chief Constable has no objection to private motor cars parking on Ely Market Place, but did object to motor 'buses. If they allowed one 'bus to park there it would be difficult to stop others, and there could not be any hardship for a bus setting down passengers at the Public Room for a dance and then parking at Barton Square or St Mary's Street. Market Square parking was for use by private motor cars only and only available on days other than market days and fair days.

1927 05 20

Prompt action by a young Ely man averted what might have proved serious damage at an Ely railway bridge. The fire occurred at the Cresswells Bridge over the River Ouse. The bridge, which is an iron structure, has a large amount of wooden sleepers, well pickled, and it was here the fire originated with flames rising seven feet into the air. Realising that a train was due to pass over he attacked it with pails of water from a tank close by. His first idea was that it was caused by a passing steamer or barge on the river but it is now thought it was started by a spark or hot cinders falling from a passing engine.

1927 07 28

Ely housing committee found a case where 17 people were using one W.C. and that sort of thing could be dealt with. More difficult were houses that were absolutely dangerous and unfit for the habitation of pigs. It would be a good thing if they made an example of a couple of cases and pulled down the houses to show that the Council had the matter in hand. Water supplies and the cheap manufacture of soap had done a great deal to encourage people in the ways of cleanliness and they now wanted better housing conditions for people to live in.

1927 08 19

A meeting for re-starting a Scout troop in Ely was held at the Shack, Nutholt Lane. The old troop was starting on a new footing, under a new name and most probably in a new type of uniform. Every boy would have to pay 2d a week, whether he was absent or present. Mr Morton was in charge and anything to do with the troop would be his matter. The Scoutmaster was not an officer of his Majesty's Army; he was not a schoolmaster or a clergyman. He was the big brother of the troop

1927 08 26

Mr Dick Atkin of Ely UDC was pursuing his duties down at the bottom of a manhole in St Mary's Street, with the trapdoor up. "I heard a lot of crashing up above and for the moment thought the whole place was going to collapse around me. I was in complete darkness for over 20 minutes and wondered what had happened until someone pulled the horse's tail out and gave me a little light to go on with",

he said. It appears a horse was standing patiently when it was struck by a car; its offside leg and hind quarters went down the hole and completely stopped the opening up. After half an hour's struggle the animal was pulled safely from the hole and daylight restored to the imprisoned man

1927 09 14

A large stone coffin of the 10th century pattern was unearthed at St John's Farm, Ely, where once there was an old monastery, part of which is still standing. Recently a very old employee intimated that something of unusual interest could be found in the garden. Digging operations commenced and it was not long before a large stone slab was discovered. The coffin had been cut out of a block of Barwick rock. Inside were bones of more than one person.

1927 10 07

The Medical Officer told Ely Guardians he had nowhere at the Institution to put infectious cases. Recently they had a refractory tramp in one ward, two lunatics under observation, both of whom required extra assistance, and had no means of isolating them. He had one case in the bathroom and another in the general ward, which upset the inmates. It was illegal to keep children in the House and some years ago they had turned the isolation hospital into a children's home which now housed 11 children and they might get an influx of two families with five or six in each.

1927 12 05

A fire which might have spread with serious consequences broke out at the Ely Beet Factory. The canteen, which is a wooden building used for sleeping quarters, was discovered to be on fire at 12.57 am and within 20 minutes a considerable portion was burned to the ground. Immediately on discovery of the outbreak a telephone message was sent to the police and they gave the alarm to the Ely, Cambridge and Littleport Brigades. Within 11 minutes Ely brigade was out of the station and arriving at the scene found the place burning very fiercely. They played on it with water from the Ouse, which flows by the factory. Fortunately the flames did not spread to the sugar store, which stands close by. All the occupants of the sleeping quarters managed to escape uninjured with the exception of the nephew of the canteen manager who sustained bad burning injuries to the face.

1928 02 22

A porter's sensation dash in front of an express train, travelling at nearly 60 mph, and a thrilling rescue, was witnessed by amazed onlookers at Waterbeach station. The express from Ely was thundering into the station when the signalman saw a man standing in the level crossing gateway. The wicket gate can be locked by a lever in the signal box but he dared not lock it with the man standing where he was, as the result would be to crush him badly. The man, who was deaf and has poor sight, then began to make a crossing. The oncoming train was less than 20 paces off when Goods Porter Ernest Curtis rushed across the line and held him between the two sets of metals while the express dashed by. The situation was so serious that onlookers thought both men had been killed.

1928 08

In the past Ely had enjoyed mild prosperity but this would not last unless the Government came to the rescue of agriculturists. This was a manufacturing and mechanical age and Ely must be prepared to take her part in it; manufacturers should be encouraged to come down and build factories outside the city, encouraged by being generously treated so far as assessment of rates was concerned. Peterborough was none the worse for factories, said Major Gordon Fowler. But agriculture was the premium industry and employed the biggest number of hands.

1928 03 08

Plans were submitted for a proposed new slaughterhouse at the rear of the White Hart Hotel, Ely. The Medical Officer pointed out the unsuitable position - there were 17 dwelling houses within 200 feet. The council had been very lenient in refusing to condemn existing slaughterhouses on the ground it might be a hardship to the owners, but the granting of a new licence was entirely different. It would be a great disappointment to a man who was starting a fresh business and a public abattoir was out of all

reason as the ratepayers would have to find a lot of money for the benefit of four or five butchers. The application was refused.

1928 05 24

Ely council decided to open the Barracks Field in Silver Street to the schools for organised games. Ely was very badly situated for child life; the streets were narrow and motor traffic made things worse for children to play on the streets. This was a most ideal spot and they could find another field suitable for the council's horses. But their horsekeeper got no half-day on Saturday and if the horses had to go out of town it would be impossible for him to put them out to grass.

1928 06 26

The annual shooting competition between the Cambridgeshire Regiment and Ely Divisional Police took place on the Butts, Lynn Road, Ely. The 'boys in blue' are to be congratulated in making such a good show against their brethren in khaki who are at present in actual training and the police were only 47 points behind their rivals. Capt D. Harper of Ely acted as hon. butt steward for the police and Sergt-Instructor Jackson fulfilled the like office for the 'Terriers'

1928 07 13

The Henny Farm, near Ely, was offered for sale by auction. Described as 'one of the best farms in the Ely district' it has the advantage of being close to the Ely and Soham railway, adjoining Barway siding. It has an excellent house and homestead, five cottages, main water and a hard road through the farm. It was bought by auction in 1904 for £13,000 and a considerable sum has been spent on improvements. Seven years ago it would have made £20,000 at least. But the opening bid was £5,000 and it failed to reach the reserve price of £9,000 – under £20 an acre.

1928 07 19

Ely Urban Council considered the advisability of obtaining a motor ambulance. Cases were frequently happening where a person was ordered off to the Hospital at once. Last week frantic efforts were made to find an ambulance but the only vehicle that might be termed an ambulance was being used at a funeral and they had to telephone to Cambridge for one. This was a standing disgrace to Ely. Their friends at March had purchased a first-class ambulance for £880 and Soham had one.

1928 07 31

Ely readers will learn with regret of the death of Mrs Elizabeth Cross, widow of the late Mr F.T. Cross of Forehill. She was born at Little Downham but for over 40 years had carried on the confectionery and bakery business at Ye Olde Tea Rooms, Ely and also at the Pem Café, Trumpington Street, Cambridge during the last two years. Of a kindly disposition she will be missed for her generosity to the aged residents of the almshouses who for many years have received a large hamper of delicacies at Christmas. She leaves a son, Mr Vernon Cross, and a daughter.

1928 09 05

Cambridgeshire gets its quote of "Weary Willies" – the wandering fraternity and ne'er-do-wells – who, homeless and penniless, are content to patronise the various casual wards or 'spikes' and seek shelter at the expense of the ratepayers. I recall a visit to Cambridge 'spike' when bread and water was all we received in the way of sustenance and a stiff task of wood sawing or stone-breaking was expected in return. The 'spike' at Ely was, however, always regarded as a 'cushy' one. Today the tramp has a comfortable mattress to rest on, a hot bath, clean towels, nightshirt and sometimes a safety razor. On leaving he is provided with bread and cheese to sustain him on his journey.

1928 09 27

The most disastrous fire seen in the fens for some years originated in West Fen Farm, Ely. Owing to the bad state of the road the Brigade experience considerably difficulty in getting close to the fire. The flames were twenty feet high and showers of sparks floated about in all directions. In the midst of the blazing yard was a valuable drum and elevator which was practically reduced to scrap iron. The glow

of the fire was noticed for miles around and many people who saw it motored or cycled to the isolated scene.

1928 11 17

The great gale which swept the country blew down trees, damaged roofs and caused damage. The most serious loss is the removal of the roof of the grandstand on the Cambridge Town Football Club's ground. The cross at St Barnabas church was carried away but no person was injured in its fall. Hoardings on the LNER Railway's property near Cambridge station have been razed to the ground and the line was blocked by a signal that was blown down near Waterbeach. At Trinity College the famous 'Sedgwick Elm' in the Fellows' Garden was partly blown down. At Ely two large sheets of lead were lifted on the roof of the cathedral nave and a huge chicken shed in Lynn Road was completely demolished.

1928 12 06

Members of the Ely Musical Society were cut with flying glass and bruised about the body in a motor bus crash. They were returning from Downham Market along a winding road when the front wheel of the bus skidded and it charged two trees. Luckily Mr Medcalfe, one of the Ortona Company's most careful drivers, stuck to his wheel which saved the situation very considerably. They were taken to a farmhouse and the driver went on the pillion of a motorcycle to Ely to get help. Another conveyance was sent to convey the unfortunate singers home but a heavy fog hanging over the fens made it difficult for traffic to proceed.

1928 12 21

The Ouse Drainage Board heard the mud and refuse from Ely Sugar Beet Factory was clogging up the river so that even tugs could not get through even with no boats in tow, except on a channel ploughed day after day. The water was being held up towards Cambridge and there was serious danger of flooding. It was a waste of money to have dredgers in the Ten Mile River getting the mud out when it was being put in faster by the Beet Factory. Thousands of tons of mud were going into the river and it was a scandalous affair. The whole of the river between Ely and Denver Sluice had a thin coating of slime all over it and was the consistency of a mud-pie. It will not be the Ouse Drainage Board much longer if this goes on: it will be the Ouse Drowning Board.

1929 02 18

A serious fire in which some valuable implements were destroyed occurred in a large hut at Whitehall Farm, Littleport. The Fire brigade were handicapped as the pipes were frozen and the whole of the structure was completely burnt out, including a 12 hp Alvis motor car, the axle and gear box of a Chevrolet lorry, a cultivator and set of harrows. Prompt action by Ely police & firemen averted a serious fire at the Bell Hotel Ely where a large beam behind a fireplace in one of the upstairs rooms had ignited. It was in a difficult position to get at and there was no alternative but to take the fireplace out.

1929 03 02

Sir: Quite a number of people took advantage of the frozen river last weekend to skate to Ely and among them were three Newnham girls. It is 34 years since last such a journey was possible. It was February 1895 that I and two friends undertook the journey. On arrival it was suggested we continue to Denver Sluice but after two miles the ice was very bad, so we returned. I wonder how many have ever succeeded in it, a distance of 72 miles there and back. I am fond of skating and have been to Ely five times – 'Septuagenarian'

1929 02 27

An Ely watchmaker told the Bankruptcy Court that he had started in an upstairs room in the High Street in 1926, moved to a shop in Broad Street and then Fore Hill. He obtained the post of tenor lay clerk at Ely Cathedral at £110 a year and for twelve months collected the water rate, being paid £1 a week for it. He played in a band occasionally and got five shillings an evening but denied his problems had been caused by drinking and loose living.

1929 06 03

Ely dispensary report – CDN 3.6.1929

1929 06 26

James Merry, lifesaver, Ely river man CDN 26.6.1929

1929 08 21

Wireless broadcasting masts, Ely – CDN 21.8.1929

1929 09 04

Ely Rex Cinema opened CDN 4.9.1929

1929 09 05

Ely City bandmaster's death – CDN 5.9.1929

1929 09 17

Ely water shortage – CDN 17.9.1929

1929 09 30

Ely Traders have decided to revert 'for ever' to the usual closing hour of six o'clock on Fridays, instead of seven as at present. Although they have benefited by the extra hour during 'summer time' it would not offset the extra cost of heating and lighting which would be necessary when the Daylight Savings Bill ceased to operate. Some shopkeepers were staying open after the legal hours – that was after eight o'clock and nine on Saturdays

1929 10 08

It was a red-letter day in the history of the Ely Co-operative Society when their magnificent new premises were opened. The old and dismal-looking premises in Broad Street have been superseded by a most modern and up-to-date business establishment. The design is Georgian in character, the front is reconstructed stone, the shop fronts are of teak and the window backs are oak. A large proportion of modern quick-service fixtures and counters have been installed and the comfort and convenience of both customers and staff have been furnished in every way. The premises are centrally-heated with electric light installed throughout.

1930 02 18

A special train was chartered to bring Mrs Albert Maltby, who lives at the West River gatehouse, near Ely, into Cambridge. The wife of a railway employee he was engaged in feeding her chickens when she slipped on the icy ground, breaking her leg. The gatehouse is in a part of the fens almost inaccessible save by the railway so a special train consisting of engine and brake was sent out to take her to Cambridge station from where she was conveyed to Addenbrooke's Hospital in the Borough Police ambulance. 30 02 18

1930 03 28

Ely Ratepayer Association's dinner was told that it was no good rushing ahead with houses and factories unless they had a good sewerage scheme. They now had electricity and a good bus service. First impressions went a long way and Palace Green should be regularly cut and rolled as it presented a neglected appearance to visitors. They also had a splendid display of antiquated dustbins and people could not understand why something better could not be devised. Some people expected to find the luxuries of a large town but they were out in the country and had to cut their cloth accordingly. 30 03 28d-e

1930 08 29

The new premises for the Loyal Order of Ancient Shepherds now under construction in Market Street, Ely are being built by workmen who were members of the Society and the bricks which came from

Warboys and Whittlesey are also made by members. In 1914 the district had been in a state of chaos but was now flourishing and the new building, designed by Tucker and Son, will be an everlasting monument to the Order. The Central Hall is panelled in oak and there will be a kitchen and four large offices. 30 08 29a-c

1930 10 16

Mr James Matthews, watchmaker and jeweller of Market Street, Ely took over the business from his father and carried on with his sons till the day of his death. For over 30 years he was a member of the old Cambridgeshire Volunteers and was considered the crack shot in all the Eastern Counties. He attended Wimbledon and later Bisley for 21 years in succession and always came out with honours. 30 10 16a

1931 01 10

The Orthopaedic (Cripples' Care) Clinics at Newmarket and Ely are run in connection with the Massage Scheme of the Red Cross Society to deal with cases of bone deformity among young children. The patients pay a small fee but save the time, expense and fatigue of going to Addenbrooke's Hospital. Infant paralysis (poliomyelitis) if taken in time should not mean a cripple for life. Regular treatment and aftercare means crippling defects are counteracted and crooked limbs can be made straight. 31 01 10a

1931 02 20

The treasurer of the Three Blackbirds Helping Hand Slate Club, Ely said the secretary collected the weekly subscriptions from members and passed the money to him. He kept it under the counter in a cigar box. But when he went for it before the share-out it was missing. When he told the members it had not been a very friendly meeting and they asked why it had not been banked. They gave him time to find the money. He was committed for trial. 31 02 20c & d

1931 04 03

Since Ely Sugar Beet factory was built there has been serious and copious discharge of dangerous effluent into the river during the 'campaign'. Organic matter flowing into the river from the lagoons and pits absorbed oxygen from the water and fish suffocated. After the factory had been taken to court matters had improved but there was still serious pollution affecting a nearby fishery and they were fined £200. 31 04 03h

1931 04 10

Sir Frederick Hiam, the great agriculturist and patriot, went to London to look after the parental interests in Stratford Market. Then he started purchasing farms all over the country and now owns 13,000 acres of land, much of it within thirty miles of Ely which he personally farms. A great believer in farm manure, he keeps as many pigs and cattle as he can. He was Director of Vegetable Supplies in the Ministry of Food 1918-21 and was knighted for his services. Now he is to become Sheriff of Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire. 31 04 10a

1931 06 12

It was a very gentle earthquake in Cambridge: suddenly in the silence of a calm and tranquil night there came a mysterious, slow, oscillatory motion, quickening and increasing in intensity. It seemed as if a giant hand had seized the bed and was shaking it, gently but with irresistible might. A washstand was overturned at Comberton but houses were rocked at Ely where some of the foundations were heard to crack. At St Ives people sought refuge on the Market Hill and could not be induced to return to bed. 31 06 12c & d & e

1931 98 18

Great interest has been excited at Ely by the arrival of a cormorant which has been perching on the western tower of the Cathedral. Through powerful glasses, it appears a fine specimen, with long

hooked beak, white breast and short fine legs. During the day has been missing from its position, evidently in search of food, but each night it has returned. It is about four years since such a bird last visited Ely and selected the Cathedral as its nightly resting place. 31 09 18a

1931 09 25

A cormorant, presumably the same bird which created something of a sensation when it perched on the tower of Ely cathedral, has been seen at Cambridge. For several nights it has come at dusk to one of the chimneys of the Saxon Cement Works, Coldham's Lane, and aroused great curiosity in the neighbourhood. It leaves its perch in the early morning and is not seen during the day, returning at night. 31 09 25

1931 09 25

Jane Bultitaft of Ely, 94, still works at the sewing machine she acquired 74 years ago. It is an American machine of the lockstitch type and was the first that came to Ely. When it arrived it was in parts and she had to put it together. In those days a machine that could sew was something very wonderful and dozens of people came to see it. In spite its constant use it is little the worse for wear and still performs its duties at the command of its mistress. 31 09 25i

1931 10 02

Mr C.B. Long of West Wrattling reapplied for a bus service to the Thurlows and Cambridge. Last year it ran four days a week and carried 2,000 single and 9,000 return passengers. Now he wanted a new service from Balsham to Newmarket. Messrs Saberton and Young ran a bus from Little Downham to Ely; it had started 2½ years ago and carried 100 passengers a day. Sometimes they ran a private car to take additional passengers. 31 10 02k & l

1931 11 20

Traffic Commissioners considered applications for bus services to Soham. A.J. Bailey operated a service to Newmarket on Tuesdays, chiefly for cinema-goers. He carried 259 passengers between January and June. However his application for a service to Ely was opposed by Ortona who'd started a service in 1921 – it was not a good paying route, the costs were almost the same as the takings. But Mr Bailey said local people favoured him and had "booed the Ortona out of Soham". 31 11 20c

1931 12 11

Mr L.J. Parker of Reliance Motor Services, Cottenham, applied for a licence to continue to run a bus service to Willingham. Last year they carried over 19,000 passengers, chiefly workpeople carried on weekly tickets. Mr B. Washington of Littleport applied to continue a service to the Ely Beet Sugar Factory although last year had seen a substantial drop owing to big reductions in the factory staff. 31 12 11d

1931 12 25

Ely Urban Council's new offices were opened by the chairman from the balcony of the building. It was the most important municipal move Ely had made in the whole of its long history and marked a new era in the future development of the city. They had converted what was previously an eyesore into architectural beauty and the new council chamber with its horseshoe table would be a credit for many years to come. 31 12 25a

1932 01 07

Scouting is progressing with new troops at Haddenham and Lt Downham, but the 1st Ely Troop has been disbanded owing to the inability to find a scoutmaster and four of their bugles are missing. The Littleport scoutmaster had also left and they were unable to find anyone else suitable. While the new bridge was being built at Adelaide one boy fell into the river but Scout Butcher held him up although he was gradually being pulled in himself. Without his help the other boy would have been drowned. 32 01 07

1932 02 05

An NSPCC inspector said he had gone to Angel Drove, Ely where he saw a tent of sticks and pieces of sacking. Inside was a roughly-constructed bed of lashed branches with four sacks stuffed with rags covered with an old blanket, coats and rags. He found a 15-year-old boy and a two-year old girl who were very miserable, huddled together to get warm from a stick fire. They were filthy and verminous and had been used for begging purposes. In a hedge he found all kinds of food that had been thrown away, which some families would have been pleased to have. 32 02 05

1932 02 18

Ely Allotment Association complained of damage caused by 2,500 rats on Bridge Fen that had dug peas out of the ground. They made a special effort with 20 men, ferrets, dogs and guns but only managed to kill 50 of them. The rats were attracted by clumps of sugar beet tops being left but the council refuse dumps were worse than the allotments. At Prickwillow rats came from two to three miles to get to pigs, and they did not know what to do. 32 02 18 & 18a

1932 04 02

The Ministry of Transport should take steps to control the speed of heavy vehicles near Ely Cathedral. Standing close to the main road it has to bear the strain of almost continuous vibration, especially during the sugar beet season when the flow of traffic is extremely heavy and causes the windows in the Deanery to shake. 32 04 02

1932 04 22

The new Smedley canning factory at Ely will handle a full range of fruits and vegetables but specialise in greengages which grow better in Cambridgeshire than anywhere else in Britain. Canning will commence in June with about 200 people employed at the outset. It is capable of dealing with 5,000 tons of fruit and 10,000 tons of vegetables a year. Conferences have taken place with local growers with plans in hand for a big increase in the local acreage of produce specially cultivated for the canner. 32 04 22

1932 06 03

Messrs Hall, Cutlack and Harlock told a rating appeal there had been two large breweries at Ely which had now amalgamated. The Forehill Brewery had been expanded, with a new bottle washing shed and additional offices. But at the Quay Brewery the mineral water factory had closed and it was only used as a storehouse for lorries that were waiting to be sold. 32 06 03

1932 08 05

Nearly 200 troops arrived at Ely for the voluntary camp of the Cambridgeshire Territorials. On Tuesday they marched to a field on the Littleport Road where the men engaged in machine gun work while trained machine-gunners were taking ranges from the water tower. The men have been accommodated in the old Barracks while the officers' mess has been at the Lamb Hotel where in accordance with the old Militia tradition the band has played outside in the evenings. All the catering has been done with local tradesmen, which has been much appreciated. 32 08 05a

1932 08 26

The purchase of up-to-date fire appliances has been a controversial subject at Ely so councillors were given demonstration of one of the latest motor fire engines at the Quay. Built on a Ford two-ton chassis it has dependable brakes and can seat officer, driver and six firemen. The pump delivers 250 gallons of water a minute through a 120 feet of hose 32 08 26a

1932 08 26

Ely council considered a letter about the proposed open-air swimming baths to be erected by a Cambridge lady. She wanted to know the price they required for the land, whether they would lay on a water supply and how much they would charge for filling it with water. It would hold 70,000

gallons and be changed once a week. Ely people wanted a swimming bath but if it was going to pay an individual, would it not pay the council? They should look into costs themselves. 32 08 26c

1932 08 26

Sir – recently at the Dorothy Café I sat at the table with an elderly farmer and the conversation drifted to the difficulty of obtaining reliable farm labour. Then he sang me a song of goodwill, grit and endeavour. It starts ‘Now if you will listen a moment or two, I’ll sing you a bit of a rhyme, I’ll tell you what I think a man must do, To make the best use of his time.’ Is it an old Cambridgeshire folk song? – J.T. Lambeth. 32 08 26d

1933 01 20

Ely Joint Isolation Hospital Committee agreed that tradesmen who charged full retail price for their goods would have 2½ % discount taken off their bill. They had not been asked – otherwise they may have refused. None had so far objected – but they had not yet had their cheques (Laughter). 33 01 09a
Ely unemployed – 33 01 20

1933 01 26

Ely Cathedral endangered by traffic – 33 01 26 & a

1932 01 26

The County Council want to restrict traffic in Minster Place and The Gallery, Ely to 10 mph. This would safeguard the cathedral against vibration caused by heavy vehicles. Mr Tyndall also said his shop had suffered, as did the King’s School, especially when the sugar beet lorries went past. But the A.A. said it was used by traffic from Soham to Lynn and the real remedy was an effective bye-pass and to extend Broad Street to Prickwillow Road. 33 01 26 & a

1933 05 15

Greyhound racing attracted a large crowd to the Downham Road Stadium, Ely when the first meeting of its kind to be held in the city went through with much success. Apart from two mishaps with the hare, everything went off well. In the first race one dog went astray by jumping the wire and in another Honeycomb was leading at the last hurdle at which it jumped the wire out of the course. 33 05 15

1933 07 20

Harold Archer died in the same house in which he had been born in Ely on 17th February 1845. That day residents first saw a locomotive engine that had been sent by road on a horse trolley by the contractor to the Eastern Counties Railway to work the ballast train and make the Railway Embankment across the Cresswells. He played a prominent part in the city’s affairs and became an authority on the drainage of the fens. 33 07 20

1933 08 08

The Minister of Transport has rejected calls for the imposition of a speed limit in front of Ely Cathedral but says steps should be taken to avoid vibration by providing the carriageway with a smooth running service on a bed insulated from the adjacent buildings. A large volume of traffic could be diverted if a by-pass road was constructed on the east side of the city and a one-way system introduced along Minster Place and the Gallery. 33 08 08

1933 08 04

Ely’s new ‘Majestic Cinema’ in New Barnes-road has an attractive front plastered in brown and cream which arrests the attention of anyone passing. Designed by F. Tucker of Lynn Road it has the latest Weston screen and Imperial sound system and will seat 370 people. Messrs Russell and Frank Wright are to be congratulated on their enterprise. The first film is Ida Lupino in ‘Her First Affair’. 33 08 04

1933 08 01

Ely potato association – 33 08 01

1933 08 03

Ely boy's pluck – river rescue medal John Gotobed – 33 08 03

1933 08 22

The Bishop of Ely's son, Charles Wright-Thomson, was one of four Eton schoolmasters who lost their lives on the Sella Glacier of the Roseq Peak in the Alps. Hundreds lined the walls of the hillside burial grounds as the coffins, covered with garden flowers and bunches of edelweiss, were buried in one grave in the cemetery adjoining the tiny church of Santa Maria. At the same time a memorial service was held in St Catharine's Chapel at Ely Cathedral and Eton College was closed to visitors. 33 08 22

1933 09 09

A disastrous fire occurred at Woodhouse Farm Chettisham, near Ely. Smoke was seen in a stack yard, one of the largest in England. Flames spread with amazing speed and soon 28 stacks were in full blaze. Hundreds of people flocked to the scene as firemen together with farmer Mitcham's workmen worked magnificently in the great heat to try and stop it spreading. 33 09 09

1933 10 02

Ely's Paradise Recreation Field is a fine, large enclosed ground that would be the envy of many a big London sporting club. It is nicely laid out, kept to perfection with a splendid pavilion and other dressing rooms. During the summer there is an excellent cricket pitch and 17 tennis courts are laid out, all occupied by various clubs. In winter it is used by Ely City Football Club and there are two full hockey pitches always in use. 33 10 02

1933 11 17

The City of Ely Fire Brigade took over the new Bedford Ford tender and fire escape purchased by Ely UDC. The present fire engine will now be hauled by this modern tender on which is seating accommodation for the men to ride. The brigade received instructions on working the tender and detaching the escape and were seen carrying out practical experiments in various parts of the city. 33 11 17

1933 11 23

A Cambridge man told the bankruptcy court that he had farmed at Rectory Farm Coton after the war, then gone into partnership in a retail milk and dairy business in Ely High Street. In 1927 he purchased part of the dairy business at Cherry Hinton Hall Farm and then bought a coal business in John Street, Cambridge. He did not know anything about the trade and he had competition. The weather was against him: the winter of 1932 was very bad for coal merchants and the summer of 1933 made it a jolly sight worse. 33 11 23

1933 11 22

Ely attempted murder charges – 33 11 22

1933 12 12

A serious fire broke out at Mr A.V. Bonnett's bakery, Broad Street, Ely. For the first time the Ely brigade had the advantage of their new equipment especially adapted for subduing blazes in rooms. The flames quickly spread due to tins of fat and other inflammable articles but they prevented it reaching the room above where there was a large quantity of fire-lighters, a ton of sugar and a quantity of margarine. However smoke completely spoiled about 50 iced Christmas cakes. 33 12 12

1934 12 04

A dull grey sky cast sombre shadows over Ely which seemed strangely quiet. Only around the vastness of the cathedral was there continual movement as hundreds and hundreds of mourners waited their turn to enter the sacred edifice for the funeral of the Bishop. Many others remained outside or attended the interment at Ely cemetery and thousands lined the streets as the cortege passed. 34 12 04

1934 02 11

A disused signal box at the West Junction, Adelaide, Ely, was completely destroyed by fire. The wooden structure, was superseded some time ago by a more modern box and was not used for any purpose. All the staff available were called out to endeavour to extinguish the flames, which soon secured a firm hold, eventually burning the box out. As a result of the fire trains on the Peterborough line were delayed for two hours. 34 02 11

1934 04 20

Controversy has raged in Ely over the various streets and roads that have been re-named during the last century. By the kindness of one of the oldest inhabitants we are able to give the names by which some were previously known: Present name Market Street, old name: Gaol Street; Barton Road – Smock Mill Alley; Mill Pits – Gallows Hill Pits (where five Littleport rioters were hung; Cresswells – Common Muck Hill; Springhead Lane – Spion Cop; High Street Passage – Tallow Lane. 34 04 20

1934 04 23

An oak beam across the top of a fireplace at 47 St Mary's Street at Ely suddenly burst into flames after smouldering for three weeks. The 400-year-old house was the original Ely Workhouse. A few doors away people are living in rooms which were once used as barracks. Had nobody been in the house at the time the results would have been disastrous for the partitions are made of wood and canvas. 34 04 23 & a

1934 04 27

A smallholder from White Cross Road, Wilburton appeared in court for passing a traffic signal at red whilst driving a motor car in Bridge Street. He told the policeman he had never seen them before and don't know how they worked. Nobody had told him what they were for or anything about them. In Ely they had policemen and A.A. men on the corners. The magistrates fined him ten shillings saying it was distressing that a man should be on the public road driving a motor car and not know what traffic signals meant. 34 04 27

1934 06 05

Crowds flocked from all parts of the diocese to see Dr Bernard Heywood installed as Bishop of Ely. Inside the Cathedral a splash of colour was provided by the arrival of Mayors in their robes and a procession of 400 robed clergy. The vast congregation awaited the time-honoured ceremony by which the new Bishop knocks thrice with his staff on the West door. Amplifying apparatus has never been allowed so the service was heard by the greater part of the congregation as only a distant murmur. 34 06 05

1934 06 21

Ely's open-air swimming pool at Angel Drove, built by the unemployed at a cost of £580, was opened in a ceremony watched by 2,000 people. It is 82 feet long with a chlorination plant and dressing rooms. The site was acquired by the Urban Council in 1853 when they decided to have a supply of water from the river. But the filters were not adequate and the scheme fell through after people became ill. It was left derelict and remained a nasty little hole until now. 34 06 21

1934 06 23

Car crashes into King Charles pub, Back Hill, Ely – 34 06 23

1934 07 11

The first air display by the recently-formed Ely Aero Club attracted 2,000 people to their flying field on the Downham Road. An attractive programme of aerobatics had been billed but was marred somewhat by the non-arrival of a number of machines. Despite this the crowd had plenty of thrills and many opportunities for joy riding. Mr H.R. Dimock was the first Ely citizen to own a private plane and his activities in the air had been watched with interest. The club hoped to have its own ground, own staff and own machines. 34 07 11

1934 08 01

Ely Old Dispensary reported a quiet, uneventful year's work amongst those for whose benefit the dispensary existed. The fact that 157 patients had been 'cured and relieved' was proof it still filled a useful niche in the life of the city. Cases treated included influenza, dyspepsia, rheumatism and diseases peculiar to women. But income was down: since the Addenbrooke's Hospital contributory scheme the parade did not realise anything like what it used to do. 34 08 01

1934 08 06

The amazing story of a young Cambridge man's cycle raids on village churches unfolded at court. He left home in the mornings, leaving people to think he was going to work, and rode around the villages, forcing boxes, safes and drawers in the churches. He carried tools in a brown attaché case and when spoken too professed great interest in the wood carvings. He'd raided churches at Cottenham, Eltisley, Harlton and Stansted as well as stealing a collecting box from the Cathedral Café, Ely. 34 08 06

1934 08 29

Ely Council's decision to allow the swimming baths to be used on Sunday afternoons prompted strong protests. The Railway Mission deplored it, as did Downham Baptist chapel. Haddenham Baptists say it will necessitate some amount of Sunday labour, Lt Thetford think it a retrograde step and Ely Sunday School Union thought that for the sake of the children Sunday should be preserved from worldly and secular labour. 34 08 29

1934 08 31

Poultry breeders gathered at Ely to discuss the possibilities of establishing an egg packing station to help them market their eggs. They had to bind themselves together as marketing was the most difficult thing they had to face. The depot would cost at least £1,500 to set up and there had to be a regular flow of not less than 6,000 dozen eggs per week. It was agreed to consider it further. 34 08 31

1934 09 13

Many thrilling flying feats were seen during Sir Alan Cobban's air display at Ely. The most popular machine was the multi-engined Handley Page 'Youth of New Zealand' in which passengers, seated in comfortable chairs in a roomy saloon enjoyed the experience of soaring over the Cathedral. Flight-Lieut Godfrey Tyson flying a 'Lincock' did aerobatics at high speed while Miss Jean Meakin's wonderful demonstration of gliding was outstanding and Ivor Price made a thrilling parachute descent. As a humorous item an old battered motor cycle was pelted with 'bombs' from the air. 34 09 13

1934 10 02

Sir – since the demolition of the military aerodrome at the end of the war, Newmarket has taken a back seat in aviation activities because of the possible danger of aircraft upsetting nervous racehorses. But the opening of the special landing ground on the Heath may dispel the fears of trainers. Newmarket has a bigger call for speedy air transport than most towns. Bury St Edmunds will soon become an airport, Cambridge has the advantages of a splendid flying school and there is an Aero Club at Ely. Now perhaps we may look forward to a local flying club here – Edward Milner, Heath Villa, Newmarket. 34 10 02

1934 10 05

A report on Ely sewers in 1910 showed they were badly planned and imperfectly constructed, being carried not along the roadways but behind houses and through gardens. In some instances houses have been erected immediately over sewer mains. Since then a few had been relayed. In 1885 some sewerage works were put down at Willow Walk which created a great nuisance to many people living in the area, an Inquiry was told. 34 10 05

1934 11 02

Branch Cut bridge at Padnal was originally constructed by the South Level Commissioners in 1827 and kept in repair until recently. A little while ago it collapsed and was now barely passable even for foot passengers whereas in the past it had always been maintained for wheeled traffic. It was a great benefit to all engaged in farming in the area between Littleport and Ely and its present condition was a scandal, councillors were told. 34 11 02 & a

1934 11 16

Road vibration caused by heavy traffic near Ely Cathedral could be eliminated by means of wood paving, a meeting was told. They had considered constructing a new road to divert traffic away but so many buildings might have to be swept away that the cost would be tremendous. The widening of the road near the cathedral had also been considered but would not be worth the tremendous amount of money required. 34 11 16b

1934 11 20

Ely Hospital of St Mary Magdalene stone from Etheldreda Abbey – 34 11 20 & a

1934 12 09

County Council plans to erect a new Poor Law Institution at Doddington were condemned by Ely Ratepayers who would fight to the last to preserve the Tower House as the Ely Institution. It was wicked to take old people to a different district and expect their friends to visit them at some expense. Where men and women had lived together for fifty or sixty years it was a scandal that the men should have to go one way and the women another. 34 12 09

1934 12 07

The Lineoleum and Floor-Cloth Manufacturer's Association wrote to Ely council after they had given council house tenants notice to quit for breaking their rules that at least six inches must be left between the skirting board and the outer edge of linoleum on the ground floor. Research suggests that the problem of dry rot was one of floor construction and not the floor covering used. They hoped the council would withdraw such restrictive regulations in regard to the use of such an inexpensive and hygienic product. The council decided to take no action. 34 12 07a

1934 12 15

Littleport Parish Council considered fitting their fire engine with pneumatic tyres. The wheels had been on the engine for 70 years and might have dry rot, all the wheels creaked and might break at any time. The men were afraid of them. In any case they would be compelled to have rubber tyres in 1939. The fire box was only seven inches from the ground and it would be no good on some of the fen roads. They could ask the Ely Fire Brigade how much they would charge to attend the fen fires, and scrap the engine. 34 12 15a

1934 12 20

Traffic Commissioners considered bus services between Ely and Littleport, Little Ouse and Shippea Hill. The LNER said that railway traffic to Littleport had showed a marked decrease with 4,000 passengers being lost to road competition in the last few years. But Mr Bert Washington said his bus services were practically identical with those he operated in 1930, though there were some unauthorised journeys not at the agreed times. 34 12 20b

1935 01 05

Two vehicles, one belonging to a haulage contractor from Oxloade and the other a van owned by a Terrington firm, came into collision at the corner of Nutholt Lane, Ely. The door of the general stores owned by H. Cowley was shattered with the wheels of the beet lorry on the door steps and straddling the radiator of the van. Joseph Stone, an elderly pedestrian, formerly a night watchman at Ely Cathedral, was struck and had his foot almost severed. He was lifted on a stretcher over the radiators of the lorries and placed in the Ely ambulance 35 01 05

1935 01 09

Ely's new unemployment centre opened at the old Angel works. Many were in seasonal occupations: one did not pick potatoes and plums or squash sugar out of beet every day of the year. People should be employed all the time, not necessarily upon wage-earning work. It was a demoralising thing to have nothing to do and here men could discover good music, good literature and good occupations. It was not just a place of warmth and shelter. 35 01 09 & a

1935 01 18

The Ministry of Transport did not appreciate the heavy traffic passing through Ely carrying agricultural produce, Colonel Archer told councillors. Traffic lights should be installed at both the Lamb and Nutholt Lane corners. The County Council had recognised the need for a bridge at Chettisham railway crossing, the main artery from London to King's Lynn docks, but a "flying bridge" was also needed at Queen Adelaide where the fire brigade and medical men were often held up and heavy beet traffic was hindered and disorganised at the three pairs of crossing gates. 35 01 18b & c

1935 03 15

Ely Beet Sugar Factory was charged with pollution of the River Ouse causing the death of thousands of fish in the river below Adelaide Bridge. The Company said pollution had occurred when the factory was not working and may have come from the sewage works. They employed 700 men during each campaign, were a tremendous benefit to farmers and an injunction would mean they had to stop working. The man who owned the fishing rights said there was bad feeling: he had been in shops in Ely where people refused to serve him and a wheel had come off his motor car after he'd left it near the factory 35 03 15m 35 03 15a, 35 03 19, 35 03 27

1935 04 02

The High Court heard evidence on the state of the River Ouse. An expert witness said the river in Ely was grossly polluted with discharge from water closets. Ely Sewage Works were entirely obsolete and useless: the mud downstream was very foul with traces of tar oil coming from the Gas Works and Ouse Catchment Board Depot. But only cooling and condensing water passed into the river from the Sugar Beet Factory. A fisheries expert said the death of fish in 1933 and 1934 was caused by sewage pollution and not the factory. 35 04 02b

1935 04 05

Ely Sugar Beet Factory was cleared by the High Court after large number of fish had died. River conditions were analogous to those of a septic tank. The bed of the Ouse had not been dredged for thirty years and was filled with impurity which was disturbed by the considerable barge traffic. Ely sewage outfall was of an exceedingly objectionable and dangerous character and there were drains connected with the Gas Works from which noxious matter found its way into the river. But the only discharge from the factory was condenser water 35 04 05

1935 05 08

One of the most pleasing features of Ely celebrations for the Silver Jubilee of King George V was the happy atmosphere which prevailed at the dinner for the unemployed, their wives and aged folk which was served at the Central Hall and the Women's Institute. Three hundred sat down to roast beef, baked potatoes, cabbage, fruit tart and custard. There were cigarettes for the men and sweets in red, white and blue bags for the women. Jubilee caskets containing goods were sent to 300 who were unable to attend. 35 05 08b & c

1935 05 15

Sunday bathing in Ely protest – 35 05 15 & a

1935 05 23

Ely traffic lights at Nutholt Lane – 35 05 23

1935 06 03

Over 3,000 farmers and workers attended an open-air demonstration at Ely to protest against the abandonment of State assistance to the sugar beet industry. It would mean disaster for agriculture. Without beet the eastern half of England would have fallen into desolation and become another distressed area. The 18 factories had installed machinery which consumed no less than three million tons of coal and coke as well as over one million tons of limestone and no fewer than 65 million bags. The cost of the industry had been worth it to the nation as money would otherwise have been spent on dole and poor relief. 35 06 03 & a

1935 07 31

W.H. Woolworth is to open one of the most modern shops in Ely. Situated on Fore Hill, the store is built in the well-known style and provides a surprising area of shop space. The second floor is devoted to store rooms to which the stock is transferred by means of an electric lift. Every provision has been made for the staff with toilets and facilities for cooking meals. There is central heating throughout the building 35 07 31b

1935 08 21

A long-felt need in Ely was discussed when young men met at the White Hart Hotel to consider the formation of the Ely Excelsior Sports and Social Club. It would meet at the hotel from 6 to 10 each evening offering billiards and table tennis together with a special room for reading. Whist drives and dances could be arranged during the winter and socials held every month. However a proposition that monthly magazines and daily newspapers should be purchased was not carried. 35 08 21a

1935 09 06

Ely Council have rejected many sewage scheme following objections by residents. But a new Simplex aeration system can be accommodated at the old site at Common Muckhill. There is no smell or anything else unpleasant. There was no emptying of tanks, no carting of sludge or the nuisance caused by emptying. One-tenth of the total flow of sewage comes from the Brewery as trade effluent and the council will negotiate with them in this matter 35 09 06 & a

1935 09 23

Ely Isolation Hospital – 35 09 23

1935 09 25

Viscount Forbes, a Trinity College undergraduate, expects to make an attempt shortly on the outboard motor boat record with a remarkable machine stored at Marshall's garage at Cambridge. Tests were carried out on the Adelaide course of a mile near Ely when an average speed of nearly 60 mph was obtained but on the return run the unit was badly damaged. Looking like a shimmering torpedo the boat has a six cylinder super-charged engine which emits an ear-splitting scream when full out 35 09 25 & a

1935 11 25

Ely Isolation Hospital was there to prevent contagious diseases from spreading to other people, it was not for the benefit of the patients but for the benefit of the outside public and should be paid for by ratepayers, Mr Everitt told the Hospital Committee. People would fight shy of going there if they knew they would have to pay maintenance charges. But accounts had been sent out and some people had paid them. In 1931 maintenance expenses came to £477 but only £1 had been received from patients – 35 11 25 a & b

1935 12 11

The managers of Coveney Church of England School are not willing for it to be converted into a junior mixed and infants' school. But it would detrimental to the children if they were deprived of the facilities of a senior school and if parents wanted to send their children to Ely there was nothing to stop them, councillors heard. A site for the new senior girls' school in Downham Road could be bought for £1,700 which was less than its commercial value. The Board of Education had objected to

plans for the new senior school at Chatteris saying it should be a two-storey building or there would not be enough space for physical training and organised games. 35 12 11

1935 12 11

Ely urban council were condemning property without having places to put the people into. They ought to approach owners to see if they could be put in proper repair. People should have decent places to live in but in many cases they did not want to come out. 35 12 11a

1935 12 18

Ely Ratepayers Association wrote to the Council asking for the amount paid to the consulting engineer who prepared a sewage scheme for Ely. The Clerk said £481 had been paid to Messrs Elliott and Brown in 1921 and a further £210 in September 1932. Councillor Merryweather said he did not mind the Council furnishing the information but the whole thing was published in the newspapers and he did not think they should be subject to scrutiny for years back. The Association should not make such requests unnecessarily. 35 12 18c

1936 02 15

Shop assistants branch formed at Ely, Newmarket – 36 02 15

1936 03 17

Ely councillors considered a parking place in Bray's Lane. The time would come when the streets would be congested with cars left in all directions. The garage charge was 6d but as soon as they started forcing cars off the streets the charge would go up to a shilling and that would not do any good to the trade of Ely. It was a shame cars should park on St Mary's Green and Barton Square and it was about time they got on with a car park of their own. But Councillor Wright thought they could put a dozen houses on the land. 36 03 17

1936 04 11

Three minutes before the service at Ely Cathedral began on Good Friday evening, a 20-years-old youth dropped dead in the organ loft. He was an articled pupil to Dr M. Conway, Cathedral organist, and his death was a tragedy of almost incredible suddenness. Just before the Cathedral choir were due to sing he was in the organ loft with the assistant organist, Mr R. Young. The latter turned his back for a few moments, and hearing a gasp found the young man had collapsed on the floor. Rushing from the loft he sent for medical assistance but he was beyond aid. Meanwhile the congregation were unaware of what had happened until the end of the service, when the Preceptor offered a prayer for the dead youth 36 04 11c

1936 04 30

The Majestic Entertainment Company of Ely appealed against the assessment on the Majestic Cinema in New Barns Road. It was in a back street and it was difficult to get people round there. The prices had been reduced and they had to remove some of the seats, decreasing the capacity to 342. As a result takings were down. Their rates were reduced 36 04 30a

1936 05 08

Ely fishmonger sells cat fish as hake – 36 05 08b

1936 05 23

Mr Lee told an inquest that when Kempton's fruiterer's premises in Ely Market Place were being demolished he'd fetched away about 150 tubs and boxes and put them in his yard. He saw something amongst them that looked like fireworks which he laid aside and soaked with water. There were also some crackers and small fireworks, but he did not dream that they were dangerous. However children found them and lit one causing a loud explosion. Mr Kempton said he had been in business 30 years and never knew about the fireworks which his father had used for fetes and school treats. 36 05 23b

1936 06 29

Boy Scouts and Wolf Cubs gathered a thousand strong at Ely to take part in a huge county rally. Six hundred camped over the weekend in the delightful surroundings of the Cathedral Park. The numerous tents dotted here and there among the trees provided a pleasant spectacle. Saturday brought 120 wolf cubs from Cambridge who chose the novel method of travelling by river, starting from Victoria Bridge. Amongst troops present were Prickwillow, Pampisford, Wilburton and the Whittlesford Sea Scouts 36 06 29a

1936 07 30

The younger generation are not following in their fathers' footsteps and drinking beer, instead they are spending money on cinemas and motor cycles, the landlord of the Rose and Crown at Little Thetford claimed when appealing against his rate assessment. Mr H. Nunn of Sutton said he employed several men in his ice-cream business but the machinery was only used six months a year while Mr G. Cobbin a miller of Downham Road Ely said he had lost trade as the beet industry had hit him heavily; he was grinding very little and the mill had not been in use for two years. J.H. Acred said his cottage at Green End Stretham was very old and had not the conveniences of modern houses. He had had a portion added to the building 36 07 30

1936 08 01

The L.N.E.R. has made provision for a heat wave by giving orders that new trolleys which serve light refreshments to the passing travellers from station platforms should be equipped with refrigerating apparatus to ensure minerals and other soft drinks are kept cool. They also serve tea, coffee, cakes, cigarettes and the dainty modern successor to the railway sandwich of grandfather's day. Two of the new barrows will be placed at Cambridge and Ely stations 36 08 01a

1936 08 21

The newly-formed Friends of Ely Cathedral will help maintain the fabric of the beautiful church and carry out necessary improvements and adornments. They will help make the Cathedral more a source of inspiration and a house of devotion 36 08 21a

1936 08 24

Queen Mary paid a surprise visit to Ely and spent an hour in the Cathedral. A man and his wife in the Cathedral noticed Her Majesty without being immediately aware of her identity. He remarked, however, on her 'likeness to the Queen' and the next moment was astonished to receive a gracious 'Good morning' from Her Majesty. Although she had mingled unnoticed with other visitors the news soon spread and there was a large crowd outside the West Door when her maroon Daimler left for Newmarket Jockey Club 36 08 24a (photo 36 08 25)

1936 09 21

Mr H.R. Dimock of Ely, an enthusiastic air pilot, had a lucky escape from serious injury when his machine crashed at Cardiff Airport. He had been demonstrating a Super Drone machine in which the pilot sits at the front, the propeller being above and behind his head. Mr Dimock's hat flew off and caught in the propeller, which snapped. Luckily he was flying fairly low and was able to bring the machine down with only a minor crash. His injuries were very slight 36 09 21

1936 09 30

A British Legion Club will be formed in Ely. Primarily it would be for the benefit of ex-Service men only, although there was no harm in letting a few others in. They have been offered some premises but these were not up to the standard they wanted. The British Legion tried to help their unfortunate colleagues who were unemployed. There were 600 ex-Servicemen in the district but only 300 had enrolled. They had not joined for what they could get out of it, but for what they could put in: they had the right stuff in them 36 09 30

1936 10 02

Fred Bennett, grocer at Ely, dies 36 10 02

1936 10 13

Ely shopping week & trades exhibition opening – 36 10 13d

1936 10 14

The Ely Trades Exhibition staged in the Canning Factory in Bray's Lane has 102 stands covering every branch of local business activity. In addition to the usual trade stalls there are features of unusual interest such as a talkie cinema, up-to-date television apparatus, a café and the only working model in the world of a roller flour mill. The slogan should be 'Shop in Ely; don't pass – buy! The more local people shopped in the city the better the shops would be. 36 10 14a – photo – 36 10 13d

1936 10 19

Friends of Ely Cathedral newly formed – 36 10 19 & a

1936 10 21

Ely Isolation Hospital arbitration hearing fixed – 36 10 21a

1936 11 13

Ely Cathedral broadcast – 36 11 13a

1936 11 18

Ely Urban and Rural District Councils had a joint isolation hospital which was originally given as a private gift by Mr Cutlack and his wife. However the County Council had decided to include Chatteris UDC as it was too small to provide a hospital of its own. But Chatteris councillors did not want it and objected to having to pay towards its support. They preferred to treat patients in their own home. Anyway it was not a proper hospital: it had no consultant staff and was no different to an ordinary nursing home. 36 11 18 & a

1936 12 23

Ely Upherd's Lane, air raid precautions – motor drivers, issue gas masks, decontaminate streets – 36 12 23a

1937 01 21

The Upper House of Convocation meeting at Westminster Abbey discussed a resolution by the Bishop of Ely. He had opposed admission to Holy Communion of persons "who having re-married after divorce and having thereby transgressed the law of Christ and the church, continue to live in disregard of the moral obligations which must bind those who are to be admitted to Holy Communion" Marriage after divorce is a sin against the seventh commandment, he said. But only one other Bishop voted in favour. 37 01 21 & a

1937 01 27

Flooding at Ely High Bridge – photo – 37 01 27

1937 05 14

Ely coronation celebrations – 37 05 14

1937 05 20

Sir - What we have come to know as the Cambridge War Memorial was part of a three-fold memorial scheme which embraced a substantial grant to Addenbrooke's Hospital for extension work, a complete record in Ely Cathedral of the names of local men killed in the war or who died from wounds and the monument at the junction of Station Road. This was to commemorate all Cambridgeshire infantry and should be 'To Victory'. It was not to be a memorial to the dead but to the living. It is for this reason that we who pass the memorial do not lift our hats as we do at the Cenotaph in London – E.W.R. 37 05 20

1937 06 03

Ely Cathedral – ‘such neglect should not exist’ – 37 06 03

1937 08 05

A maroon fired shortly after 9.30 caused a smart turn-out of the Ely Fire Brigade. A quantity of tar in front of the tar-still at the gasworks had caught fire and, although not many gallons were involved, the dense smoke gave the impression of a serious outbreak. The brigade found on arrival that the gas workers had almost quelled the flames and it was extinguished within half-an-hour. 37 08 05

1937 08 07

Pearl Hills of Willow Walk Ely is the Cambridgeshire winner of one of the bicycles presented by the Union of Cycle Manufacturers to boys and girls born on the same day as Princess Margaret Rose. 37 08 07

1937 09 06

Ely troops on manoeuvres can use Isolation Hospital if ill – 37 09 06

1937 09 16

War will be declared at midnight on Saturday – at any rate for the purpose of manoeuvres – and Ely will be in the war zone. 450 men from Liverpool, Manchester and London arrived in the city and went into camp at Barton Fields, arousing the curiosity of residents who have visited in large numbers and showed considerable interest in the military activities. It is the largest exercise of its kind since 1918 but the only troops are members of the Royal Signals Supplementary Reserve; most are Post Office employees who give up their spare time so they could assist the Regular Army in the event of conflict 37 09 16

1937 09 20

George Hall, Ely coroner died; had held many offices including registrar and high bailiff of county court – 37 09 20a

1937 09 29

A scheme of 1853 provided Ely with a supply of water from the River Ouse which was stored in an underground reservoir then pumped to the water tower. The old reservoir was abandoned in 1885 and in 1933 was converted into an open-air swimming pool. Then steam-driven wells were sunk at Isleham to take water from the chalk. Now they plan a new underground reservoir tank which, with the present water tower, will ensure four day's supply in the event of emergency. But proposals for another water tower will not be proceeded with on account of its vulnerability to attacks by aircraft, councillors heard. 37 09 29a

1937 11 05

The cost of providing and maintaining Ely fire brigade and equipment was considerable and there should be payment if they were to attend fires in the rural area, councillors heard. Only Downham, Sutton, Witcham and Haddenham had firefighting equipment but no one would work the Haddenham engine. The whole district was now connected to a water supply so parish councils should connect to the mains and erect stand pipes. But the Cambridge brigade had offered their services without any retaining fee and that would be cheaper. 37 11 05b

1937 12 03

Ely High School buildings are old and a hotchpotch of makeshifts; we are greatly troubled by the noise in the front and a great deal of time is wasted in moving about in congested spaces, Headmistress Miss B. Tilley reported at Speech Day. The domestic science room is being equipped for laundry work and sixth-form girls are taught typing and shorthand, giving them elementary business training. They were fortunate to have a mistress with special qualifications in speech training so girls could learn to speak well and clearly, a necessity for those who wish to make a success of their career 37 12 03

1937 12 10

Ely Kumin Café defrauded by lorry driver – 37 12 10

1937 12 31

Supt P.J. Newell, deputy chief constable of Isle of Ely Police retires – Ely practically crime less – 37 12 31

1938 01 14

Ely water tower on Cambridge Road, was built in 1853 and took water from the River Ouse until 1884-5 when by a deep well was sunk at Isleham. It was designed for a population of only 6,000 – 2,500 fewer than now – and needed to be constantly topped up. In case of war, when supplies of electricity or crude oil might be suspended, the tank would be totally inadequate to meet demand from the sugar factory, brewery and laundry. This would leave no water for fire-fighting purposes. They needed a larger reservoir in a field adjoining the present tower, an Inquiry heard 38 01 14 & a

1938 01 20

Ely Aero Club (Humphrey Roger Dimmock, proprietor) let out planes for private hire but not commercial purposes. They'd received a telegram from a man in Coventry asking to hire a machine for a day. He'd been offered a Hawk for £5. But as the certificate of Air Worthiness was at the Air Ministry the man refused to hire it, saying he was not satisfied with the condition of machine. He'd flown to Ely, having to land at a village because he could not find the airfield, and claimed expenses for the journey and hire of another plane. 38 01 20a

1938 01 21

Queen Elizabeth and Princess Helena Victoria toured Ely Cathedral. No special preparations had been made and the Cathedral was not closed to others. When news spread there were quickly more than the usual number of visitors within the walls. The Royal party also saw the undercroft & the King's School. This was the Queen's first visit to the Cathedral; she hopes to come again soon and bring the two Princesses with her 38 01 21a

1938 02 28

Sir Frederick Hiam, a former High Sheriff, died at his residence, Grange Road. He was best-known as an agriculturalist, acquiring many farmers in the Eastern Counties after 1910. He was Director of Vegetable Supplies in the Ministry of Food 1918-21 and toured the Colonies, being knighted for his services. He took a great interest in skating, winning the 220 yards word championship in 1895 in record time and was president of Cambridge Town Football Club. He was a member of the Ouse Drainage Board and chairman of three Drainage Commissioners. His funeral will take place at Ely, where Lady Hiam was laid to rest three weeks ago. 38 02 28

1938 03 15

Padnal fen road at Ely should be finished 18 inches above the existing level to allow it to be better drained. Since the road lies under the bank the pressure of water percolating under it might cause the surface to break up as happened during the recent flood. The filling under the road should have porous material but if this is too expensive then there should be a row of field pipes under the road at the toe of the bank with drains every 200 feet, Ely council was told. – 38 03 15a

1938 03 15

Ely water supply – 38 03 15a

1938 04 26

Mr R. Wright's butcher's shop in Ely High Street was completely gutted by fire. The old rafted premises and a quantity of fat offered a good hold for the flames which cast a glow over the whole city and only the skeleton of the building now remains. Everything was destroyed, including the whole stock of meat with the exception of that in the refrigerator; tinned stuffs were piled up on the floor with the charred remains of sides of beef, pork, carcasses of mutton and sausages. Mr Wright and

his family have been rendered homeless and residents of the adjoining property, which was considerably damaged, have had to seek shelter elsewhere. The blaze roused the whole city 38 04 26, 38 04 26a

1938 05 20

Car strikes pedestrian at Ely, Prickwillow Old Bank woman theft – 38 05 20a

1938 07 06

Ely had suffered a scarlet fever epidemic of some severity; over half the children affected attended the National School in Market Street. They should be taught in as hygienic conditions as possible. But the buildings are badly lit and ventilated with inadequate windows or sanitary provision. For children of a tender age they are a disgrace to the city, the Medical Office reported. There were also epidemics of measles and mumps striking the 5-10 year old age groups 38 07 06c

1938 07 14

Ely High School for Girls was a ‘rabbit warren’ and a new Market Street School needed – 38 07 14c & d

1938 07 19

Ely cemetery conditions – 38 07 19

1938 08 30

Ely council – Barracks field, waterworks – 38 08 30 & a

1938 09 28

With the delivery of 20,000 gas masks from the Home Office – part of a consignment of 70,000 for the Isle – the Ely depot has been the scene of tremendous activity. Wardens, special constables and members of the public have been assembling them ready for distribution. A census of rooms available in houses will be taken to accommodate people who may be evacuated from London. Territorials have been filling bags with sand at the Barracks ground. They will be used to protect the Drill Hall, which is being made gas-proof 38 09 28b

1938 10 05

At Ely, 16,600 respirators were assembled at Woolworth’s but there was a shortage of smaller ones and none at all for infants. The W.I. and Mothers’ Union made plans for evacuating 500 children under five, they would be placed in Ely Badminton and W.I Halls and Littleport Constitutional Hall. Tradesmen report a brisk trade for black-out material and corrugated iron for dug outs. The drill hall is practically encased with sandbags and a pit for the anti-aircraft guns prepared in the parade ground. In event of an air raid the Ely Jam Factory siren will be sounded 38 10 05aa

1938 10 25

Ely Council discussed air raid precautions and thanked the 140 volunteers who assembled the respirators, working till three in the morning without a break. However there were difficulties: “Whatever we try to do at Ely, the big bugs at March put the damper on it”, Col Archer said. They were going to test the air raid siren that had been fixed to the roof of the police station. The siren had been tested at March and was not thought satisfactory, so it had been passed on to Ely. But if it was not good enough for March, it was not good enough for them. 38 10 25a

1938 10 25

Ely Field Club asked the council to restore ancient names to certain streets, such as Castle Hithe to the part now known as Railway Terrace, Smock Mill Lane to the lower part of Barton Road and Walpole Lane to Silver Street. Perhaps a double name plate could be erected with the old name underneath the present one. The old names sounded very well but there would be difficulties with the post. People would not like West Fen Road to be called Cow Lane and where is Bugs Alley? 38 10 25b

1938 11 26

There was a mistaken idea that to send a girl to Ely High School was a heavy expense to parents. The school fees were only £10 a year and included books and stationery. There were scholarships offering total remission of fees and travelling expenses, headmistress Miss B. Tilley said. Education is extraordinary cheap and attended by splendid opportunities which no girl should be allowed to miss. Ivy Steadman had obtained honours at Southampton University College while Hilda Ames and Beatrice Rushbrook have completed their training as teachers. 38 11 26a,

1938 12 31

Sanitary conditions in Ely in the 1830s were terrible and in 1853 the Board of Health built the existing water tower; now the foundation stone was laid for a new concrete reservoir to cater for increased growth. Nothing sort of an earthquake or a direct hit from an aerial torpedo would deprive consumers. 38 12 31a

There is a separate index to stories about Ely during the Second World War as reported in the Ely Standard. Contact me for details

1939 01 12

Lt Downham Football Club has been closed for a fortnight because of complaints about the conduct of spectators. The start of a match between Ely City Reserves and Little Downham Swifts was delayed by half an hour due to the non-arrival of the referee and, owing to the hostile and abusive spectators who constantly encroached upon the ground and hooted the referee and Ely players, the game became a farce. The linesman, who encouraged and assisted in the disorderly conduct of the spectators, was suspended from taking part in football for the rest of the year 39 01 12f

1939 01 18

Ely livestock market gives cause for concern, a report says. Changes made by A.T. Grain could have been better planned and considerable improvements could be made on Messrs Comins' area. Various articles were sold that should not be permitted in a livestock market. The entrances should be improved, Comins' section completely reconstructed, cattle pens removed and the sale of timber and ironmongery prohibited. 39 01 18

1939 01 21

Claude Hulbert, who appears in the film 'His Lordship Regrets' at the Victoria Cinema, was not born in Ely, unlike his brother Jack. He came to Caius aged 17, took part in Footlights productions and made his first professional appearance in Cambridge at the A.D.C. Theatre with Ernest Crampton's concert party 'Cigarettes'. He finds broadcasting easiest, then screen work – if you make a mistake you can do it again, but on stage it's too late, he says. 39 01 21

1939 02 06

Ralph Wright, Ely RAF Volunteer Reserve Pilot, does stunting over Ely, then crashes and killed at Chatteris – 39 02 06

1939 02 10

Inquest on pilot Wright of Ely, who crashed at Chatteris – 39 02 10

1939 02 14

Ely ARP scheme most efficient – 39 02 14a

1939 02 25

Mr H.R. Dimock flew over Ely in a Heyford bomber as official observer during the two-hour blackout to test the A.R.P precautions. The night was wet and rain on the windows made visibility difficult and light from the engine exhaust caused a slight haze preventing weak lights from being visible. So he

used the revolving turret which was quite open. As they discussed where to drop imaginary bombs the number of lights diminished but there were always about 300 showing somewhere. The railway station was plainly visible and could have been bombed with great precision 39 02 25b

1939 03 14

Ely jam factory chimney causes complaints; the fountain was an eyesore and should be moved – 39 03 14a

1939 05 05

The Ely and Chatteris area would receive about 9,000 evacuees in three days, the W.V.S. was told. Accommodation offered for the children far exceeded the number that would be billeted, but there was not sufficient accommodation for adults. The first batch of evacuees would arrive at Ely at 1.05pm, bringing 1,000 and the second train at 5.35 and the W.V.S. could escort them to their billets. The receiving stations in Ely would be Silver Street and Broad Street schools. Food would be provided but the authorities did not have the means to prepare or serve it 39 05 05 & a

1939 05 17

Ely's old Drill Hall was an awful place, not fit for a gangster to live in. But the new one is one of the most modern of its type and will be used for the training of personnel. The Isle's own Territorial Army battalion is nearly up to strength and if youngsters joined the Territorials they would be 'old hands' when called up for service in the Regular Army 39 05 17a, 18a

1939 09 27

Problems with regard to evacuees in the Isle were discussed. At one Ely school there were only two English girls, the rest being Jews. They were receiving Jewish education and had been told they had to fast on Saturdays, as laid down for members of the Jewish faith. It was too expensive to black out the windows of every school but children must receive a full education. At Outwell boys of 15 were billeted in the homes of fruit pickers who had to return home early to look after them. As a result hundreds of tons of fruit would be ruined. The lads should help with the crops. 39 09 27

1939 09 28

Ely old brewery gutted, girders crash down, debris falls on air-raid shelters; was storing bags for Beet Sugar Corporation – 39 09 28

1939 10 10

Ely Beet Sugar Factory fire – 39 10 10

1939 10 13

An Ely police constable told the court he was cycling with another officer along Cambridge Road on the first night of the black-out when he was struck by a van. The driver said he was travelling at 10-15 mph with only sidelights, due to the blackout. He suddenly saw two cycles; they carried red and white reflectors, but had no light on. The first thing he'd seen was the strap of a gas mask. The policemen admitted they did not have lights on their bicycle but claimed the man was speeding. The driver was fined. 39 10 13c

1939 11 21

The Bishop of Ely is to leave the Palace permanently for a six or eight-bedroomed house. – 39 11 21a & b

1939 12 20

Ely Council Surveyor reported that a number of cracks and bulges had appeared on the south-east side of the old water reservoir. There was no doubt the damage had been caused by lightning. The settlement of the new tank had nothing to do with it. The tank was drained of 990 tons of water and when it was filled another pier started to crack, so it was immediately drained again. Twelve months

ago there was nothing wrong with the tower which was built 84 years ago. They should claim on their insurance 39 12 20b

1939 12 28

A collision between an Army tank and a lorry occurred on the Station Road, Ely, underneath the railway bridge. The tank, which was driven by R.W. Baker, was travelling towards Newmarket when it hit the lorry which was travelling to the Ely Beet Sugar Factory with a load of beet. Very little damage was done to the vehicles and both drivers escaped injured. But traffic was held up for about half an hour 39 12 28

1940 02 02

Ely parents neglected children – 40 02 02c

1940 02 14

A.R.P. exercises at Ely – 40 02 14b

1940 02 28

Ely ARP exercises – 40 02 28b

1940 03 13

Ely large-scale ARP exercise – 40 03 13a

1940 03 20

New hospital for Ely to deal with infectious diseases – 40 03 20a, b

1940 04 30

Parson's Charity almshouses, Ely – tablet dedicated 40 04 30

1940 05 22

Ely proposal to take over Grange for infectious diseases hospital vetoed by county – 40 05 22c

1940 06 25

Ely decide no war-time street lighting – 40 06 25b

1940 07 03

Gunner John Clark shot by sentry, Ely coroner told – 40 07 03a

1940 09 03

Ely children in torpedoed ship – Lavender – safe – 40 09 03b

1940 10 15

Ely not to resort to compulsory billeting as did year ago – 40 10 15a

1940 01 26

Death of former Dean of Ely. — Dr. Alexander Francis Kirkpatrick died at Bournemouth on Monday at the advanced age of 90. He was Dean of Ely from 1906 to 1936 and Master of Selwyn College, Cambridge, from 1898 to 1907. Born at Lewes and educated at Haileybury and Trinity College, Cambridge, Dr. Kirkpatrick became a Fellow of Trinity in 1871, Winning the Carus Greek Testament Prize in 1870, he was an assistant tutor of Trinity by 1871, and in that year sat for the theological examination, being placed in the first class. The examination was reconstituted as a Tripos two years later. Besides being placed in the first class, he was awarded all three prizes in that examination. He was ordained a deacon in 1874, and a priest in the following year by the then Bishop of Ely, Dr. Woodford. He became examining chaplain to the Bishop of Winchester in 1878, and later served Dr. Davidson in the same capacity. When he was 33 he became Regius Professor of Hebrew and Canon

Residentiary of Ely, retaining the Chair till 1903, in which year he followed the newly-elected Master of: Pembroke, Dr. Mason, in the Lady Margaret Professorship. When Bishop J. R. Selwyn died, Dr. Kirkpatrick succeeded him as Master of Selwyn. He left Cambridge in 1906 for the Deanery of Ely, and in Convocation he persistently supported those who worked for Prayer Book revision. In 1936, at the age of 86, failing-health forced him to resign his post at Ely, but he showed surprising vigour in his last years.

1940 05 10

Ely Theological College Principal.—The Rt. Rev. Bishop Walter J. Carey, D.D., Chaplain of Eastbourne College, has, I learn, accepted the Bishop of Ely's invitation to become Principal of Ely Theological College in succession to the late Canon C. J. Smith (writes Watchman). The new Principal will also be installed as a Canon of; the Cathedral. Dr. Carey returns to Ely, for in 1898 he was a student at the college. He also had a well varied career. An Oxford man, he was in charge of the Church of Ascension, Lavender Hill, London, and Librarian of Pusey House, Oxford, from 1908 to 1917. Two years later he was appointed warden to Lincoln Theological College, and in 1921 he was consecrated Bishop of Bloemfontein, South Africa. He retired in 1934, and later took up office as secretary of the S.P.G., later accepting the position as chaplain at Eastbourne. During the last war he was chaplain in the Navy

1940 08 30

Bishop of Ely's Health. — The Bishop of Ely (Dr. B. O. F. Heywood), who left the Palace about a fortnight ago, for a rest cure under doctor's orders, returned to Ely on Monday (writes Watchman). Unfortunately, this does not mean that Dr. Heywood has been returned to health, but it is hoped that the rest he is continuing to take will soon bring about the desired effect. A vigorous worker who does not spare himself, the Bishop, who is in his 70th year, has found that the willing spirit has overtaxed the none-too-robust body.

1940 11 01

Nazi Surrender to Woman. — When a Junkers 88 bomber was shot down at Stuntney, near Ely, on Wednesday afternoon, two occupants, aged about 18 to 20, threw down their revolvers and gave themselves up to a woman, who was the first person on the scene. The two other members of the crew, who had baled out by parachute, were captured in Soham Fen and taken to Newmarket. The machine had been badly damaged by R.A.F. fighters and was finished off by another fighter. The Nazi pilot crashed on Mr. Owen Ambrose's farm at Quanea Fen. Later, Mr. Ambrose told a reporter "The plane touched down in a ploughed field, jumped a ditch and came to rest in a beet field. The first person on the scene was Mrs. Ashman, who lives at the farm. As she approached the two men, they emptied their revolvers and threw them away. Other men from the farm came up and the Germans were driven away in a lorry by Mr. Brooks." The two who baled out were uninjured. December 13,

1940 12 13

Bishop Resigns. — Many in the diocese will learn with regret that the Bishop of Ely (Dr. Heywood) has found it necessary to resign. The King has approved the resignation of Dr. Heywood, who had previously intimated to the Archbishop of Canterbury his desire to vacate the see owing to ill-health. The resignation will take effect on December 16. Dr. Heywood, who was appointed to the see of Ely in 1934 in succession to Dr. White-Thomson, was Bishop of Southwell from 1926 to 1928, when he resigned on account of ill-health. Later his recovery enabled him to accept appointment as assistant bishop of the diocese of York and Bishop Suffragan of Hull.

1941 01 03

Retirement—Mr. Fred W. Green, Clerk to the Ely R.D.C., who retired on Tuesday, received a presentation in appreciation, of his work at a meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. The gift was a wristlet watch, and the presentation was made by the Chairman of the Council (Ald. H. J. Martin), who spoke of the number of years Mr. Green had served the Guardians and then the Rural District Council

1941 02 07.

Leaving Ely.—News has reached me this week (says Watchman) that one of the best-known figures in the Ely district. Canon T. J. Kirkland is leaving for a church appointment. Headmaster of Ely Kings' School since 1918, Canon Kirkland has now been appointed Vicar of Rustington, Sussex, and he expects to leave Ely sometime in April. Canon Kirkland was born at Wakefield Yorks. in 1884, the son of Mr. Alfred Kirkland, a well-known organ builder in his day. He came to Ely in 1906 as a junior science master at the King's School, and he was appointed Headmaster in 1918. At the school he was responsible for the formation of the Boy Scouts group, and he was for some years District Commissioner of the movement. For a number of years Canon Kirkland has been a J.P. and a member of the Urban Council.

1941 04 30

Ely isolation hospital needs extra hut – 41 04 30

1941 05 02

Social Centre Soon for Ely - Ely (writes Watchman) is on its way to solving its problem of finding a social centre for evacuees. I learn that the organisers have every reason to hope that they will be allowed to use premises in St. Mary's Street. Plans have been made and work can begin as soon as the sanction of the committee of management has been obtained. A committee of women, appointed by themselves, has been formed, and a squad of cleaners is ready to begin work. Crockery and tea-cloths have been bought, and a sewing-machine has been promised for the use of the many women who want to sew. Another acquisition is a piano.

1941 06 06

Ely Cathedral Railings.—I learn from the Dean of Ely (writes Watchman) that the Ministry of Supply has communicated with the Dean and Chapter requesting that the wrought iron railings around the cathedral be taken down to help the war effort. The Dean remarks that he does not like the idea at all and intended to write a letter to the Press on the subject in due course. Although he is anxious to help the war effort as much as possible, he considers that the removal of the railings may possibly lead to similar occurrences which led to the closing of the Lady Chapel some time ago.

1941 06 06

New Bishop of Ely. After the "threat" in the London Press that the new Bishop of Ely might be an Oxford man, it was something of a relief on Friday to learn that a member of a Cambridge college, had been nominated (says Watchman). For this and for other reasons, the selection of the Rev. H.E. Wynn, of Pembroke, is distinctly welcome, and the choice is one which, I am sure, must have given great pleasure to many in and around Cambridge. Possessed of a very likeable personality, and that very desirable quality, a sense of humour, Mr. Wynn is young for a bishop, for his two immediate predecessors were over 60 when elected; but an interesting point is that Dr. Chase, who preceded Dr. White-Thomson and Dr. Heywood, was just Mr. Wynn's age when he took up the diocesan duties in 1905, and was also, like Mr. Wynn, a distinguished member of a Cambridge college.

1941 07 19

Jack & Claude Hulbert visit with Hulbert Follies, Jack born Ely, both at Caius College, wrote Footlights production 'Cheer Oh, Cambridge!' – 41 07 19, 41 07 26a

1941 08 08

Enthronement of New Bishop of Ely. With traditional ceremony and piety, the 63rd of a long line of the illustrious prelates to the see of Ely was formally enthroned yesterday. Clergy and laity from all corners of the diocese, numbering about 2,000, saw the ceremony of the initiation of Dr. H. E. Wynn as the new Bishop. The stately ritual, steeped in centuries-old tradition and splendour, was observed with due solemnity and rite. Waiting at West door with the mandate of induction were the Archdeacon of Canterbury (the Ven. T. K. Sopwith), the Dean of Ely. Archdeacons, residentiary and honorary canons, minor canons and chaplains. At 2.30 the Bishop, attended by his chaplains, knocked three times on the door with his staff and requested enthronement and installation. The oath of allegiance

was taken in the choir. Later, kneeling before the High Altar, with the Dean and Archdeacon of Canterbury and Canons kneeling at the steps of the Sanctuary immediately behind the Bishop, the ceremony of enthronement began, and was concluded at the Episcopal Seat. The ancient mandate of the Archbishop of Canterbury was read during the ceremony of installation at the Bishop's stall in the Choir.

1941 10 22

Jewish evacuees at Hereward Hall, Ely – photo – 41 10 22a

1941 11 15

Ely coroner inquest on five soldiers who died from burns while on guard; petrol was thrown on stove in guard hut – 41 11 15a

1942 01 01

Ely cats are disappearing during blackout; thefts organised from London? 42 01 01

1942 01 08

Typhoid – mild outbreak at Ely – 42 01 08

1942 01 29

State of cowsheds and dairies, Ely area – 42 01 29

1942 02 05

Ely people facing a serious crisis – paratyphoid outbreak blamed on milk supplies – 42 02 05a

1942 02 14

Capt Robin Cutlack of Ely & Lieut High Chivers of Wisbech killed in Far East – 42 02 14b

1942 02 20

Killed In the Far East - It is announced that two well-known officers, with strong Cambridgeshire associations, have been killed in action in the Far East. They are Lt. Hugh Chivers of Wisbech, and Capt. Robin Cutlack, only son of Col. W. P. Cutlack, Zone Commander of the Isle of Ely Home Guard, chairman of the Cambs, Isle of Ely Territorial Army Association, a former High Sheriff and a former Commanding Officer of the County Regiment. He was also the grandson of the "G.O.M." of Ely, Mr. William Cutlack, a former Chairman of the Isle of Ely County Council and also a former High Sheriff. Robin Cutlack, who spent his boyhood in Cambridge and played cricket for St. Giles in the holidays, was one of those people who had a most stimulating effect upon all whom he came into contact. Apart from his efficiency, this characteristic no doubt contributed to his quick promotion, which was due to merit, not to the fact that he was the son of an old C.O.—a fact probably unknown to his recent Commanding officers. Like his father, he was up at Pembroke

1942 03 20

Ninety Last Monday, — Mr. Wm. Cutlack of Cambridge Road, Ely, reached the age of 90 last Monday (writes Watchman). In local government he has played a prominent part, and he was known as "father" of the County Council. As a young man Mr. Cutlack became associated, with the brewery established at Waterside, Ely, by the late Mr. Frank Harlock, and which today trades under the name of Hall, Cutlack and Harlock. He is a native of Littleport and was one of the original members of the Isle County Council, having attended the first meeting when the council came into being in 1889. In 1931 he was made an Alderman and in that year he presented to the Council the official arms of the county. Ald. Cutlack was presented with an illuminated transcript of the minutes as testimony of the esteem and regard which the Aldermen and Councillors entertained for the high character and faithful

service, which, as administrator and High Sheriff, he had rendered to the county during a period of 40 years. For 14 years he served on the Ely Urban District Council and from 1913 to 1918 he occupied the chair,

1942 04 10

Cathedral Wedding. — At Ely Cathedral on Tuesday afternoon, Miss Gwendolen Sara Wynn, only daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Wynn, of Debden, Guildown, Guildford, was married to Canon John Sandwith Boys Smith, of The College, Ely, and St. John's College, Cambridge, elder son of the late Rev. E. P. Boys Smith and of Mrs. Boys Smith. The officiating clergymen were the Bishop of Ely, uncle of the bride, and the Dean of Ely. The service was choral and a reception was held at Bishop's House.

1942 04 29

Ely Kum-In Café owner charged theft army blankets – 42 04 29

1942 06 05

Bishop Walsh installed at Ely. The Rt. Rev. Gordon John Walsh., D.D., was installed as Residentiary Canon at Ely Cathedral on Saturday by the Bishop (Dr. H. E. Wynn), who at the same time handed in Bishop Walsh his commission as Assistant Bishop of the Diocese.

1942 09 07

King Peter of Yugoslavia inspects cadet rally, Ely – 42 09 07

1942 09 11

Cadets' Parade,—As Dickens once observed, a military parade is "indeed a beautiful and noble sight" and Sunday's Army Cadet rally at Ely provided striking evidence of the truth. The cadets, nearly 1,200 of them, came from all over the county for the parade, which was one of the largest of its kind that England has ever seen. An added point of interest was the fact that among the interested spectators at the march was none other than the young monarch of Yugoslavia, King Peter, who was celebrating his 19th birthday. Preceding the inspection by Major-General Viscount Bridgeman, chairman of the British National Cadet Association on the Paradise ground, the battalions attended divine service, held appropriately enough in Ely Cathedral, within whose precincts he met the fighting men of generations. The Dean of Ely, the Very Rev. L. E. Blackburne, conducted the service, the congregation filling the whole of the great cathedral

1942 12 25

December 25, 1942

Church Army Canteen. Although the response to the Bishop of Ely's appeal for funds for a new Church Army Canteen at Ely Market Place has not reached the proportions hoped for, the new accommodation has been erected, and was in use for the first time on Sunday.

1943 02 10

Ely lady found in three feet of water in flooded communal shelter a few yards from home in Fieldside, Ely – 43 02 10a

1943 04 20

Fire at dentist's, Minster Place, Ely – 43 04 20

1943 06 18

Ely nurseryman fined for growing glowers in glasshouse instead of vegetables – 43 06 18

1943 06 25

Hymn Singing for War Charities —I hear (says Watchman) that Mr Fred Gibson, of Little Downham, has raised a considerable sum of money in aid of war charities by his hymn singing tours in various parts of the district. On Sunday afternoon he visited Ely and sang through the streets. His efforts met

with a generous response from a large audience. In the evening he continued his tour and the afternoon's collections were considerably augmented. During the tour Red Cross Cadets and Nurses went out with collecting boxes, a total of £35 1s. 8d. being raised for Prisoners' of War Parcels Fund. Mr. Gibson expressed his appreciation for the help he received from these collectors, and for the response of the public.

1943 08 20

Second-Hand Clothes Ban, — Unless second-hand clothes vendors can produce a satisfactory certificate to the effect that all such clothes being offered have been properly sterilised, their sale will be prohibited at Ely Market Place. This was the recommendation of the Markets Committee, which was approved by the council on Monday, when the Clerk was directed to ascertain from all local persons offering second-hand clothes for sale what precautions were being taken against the possibility of spreading disease.

1943 10 08

Airmen stole petrol, varnish and tins of jam from airfield, Ely men charged with receiving it – 43 10 08

1943 10 15

Ely W.A.A.F. plots fighters.—A Cambridgeshire sergeant in the W.A.A.F., who slept out in the fields when her quarters were bombed during the Battle of Britain, is today a sergeant floor supervisor in the operation room of a Fighter Command station on the South Coast. Her most-exciting days on duty were during the Dieppe raid and the escape of the Scharnhorst and Gneisenau from Brest. She is Sergeant Rita Harvey, a 23-years-old native of Glasgow, whose home is near Ely

1944 01 25

Ely Urban and Rural councils presented with plaques from Air Ministry for War Weapons Week – 44 01 25

1944 06 23

Link with Ely Cathedral. — An interesting link with Ely Cathedral comes to notice as the result of the award by the King in his Birthday Honours List of the silver leaf medal of the Victorian Order to Mr. W. Bell Kempton (says Watchman), He received the award on the completion of nearly 59 years as lay clerk at St. George's Chapel, Windsor, the medal entitling him to the designation M.V.O. He is 81 and his family have been connected with Ely Cathedral since the 14th century. His father was a lay clerk there and his great-great-grandfather, Mr. Thomas Kempton, was the composer of the service Kempton in B flat, which is still frequently sung in cathedral and collegiate churches. Mr. Bell Kempton was a chorister at Ely Cathedral from 1870 to 1878.

1944 12 08

A "Bright" reply?—With barely 25 per cent of the street lights working, Ely Urban Council on Monday seemed agreed that there were certain "black spots" that needed attention (writes Watchman). Caution has been the lodestar in their deliberation on re-lighting the city and a member remarked ironically that somehow Cambridge seemed much brighter than Ely. The given answer was that there were more lights. Ely's "bright" reply was, of course, more lights—three of them. There are still 172 that can be lit.

1944 12 19

Ely woman falls from train, associated with lodger – 44 12 19

1944 12 28

George Henry Tyndall, proprietor Minster Press, Ely; accomplished photographer featured in Atkinson's Ely Cathedral and Hunts VCH – 44 12 28a

1945 03 16

Fine Pike. A fine pike was landed from the waters of the Lark at Marsh's Corner, Prickwillow, on Sunday, by Mr. A. E. Meadows, of Broad Street, Ely. A number of anglers saw him land the fish, which weighed 21¼ lb. In length it was 37½ and in girth 19¾ ins.

1945 10 15

Princess Royal attends British Red Cross Society thanksgiving service at Ely Cathedral – 45 10 15

1946 02 18

Cambridgeshire Regiment parade at Ely Cathedral – 46 02 18

1946 03 05

Malachi Waddelow, farmer of Ely – will – 46 03 05

1946 04 29

Ely Remand Home master assaulted, boys escape – had been demolishing air raid shelter in school playground – 46 04 29

1946 08 22

Haddenham woman, Doris Blake, and German PoW Alexander Todt – he formerly from Africa Corps working at Chivers Farm, Aldreth, she from 'The Retreat' Sand Lane; found on yacht in channel– 46 08 22; in court – 46 08 24 & a; Todt returns Ely PoW camp – 46 08 26b

1946 09 16

RAF Thanksgiving service Ely Cathedral – 46 09 16a

1946 10 03

Ely Cathedral war shrine sketch – 46 10 03

1946 12 06

Railway station £1.2M plan; double single line from Ely Dock to Soham, restore pre-war standards – 46 12 06

1947 03 06

Last night's blizzard completely cut off villages around Newmarket and an official of the Eastern Counties Omnibus Company told a reporter: "The position is absolutely hopeless. We can run no bus services to the country whatsoever". All roads to Ely are impassable and drifts piled ten and twelve feet high have brought road traffic to a standstill. Villages cut off by snow included Elsworth and Knapwell. "Neither the mail nor the papers have arrived to-day" an Elsworth resident told the "C.D.N." today. "There are waist-high drifts in the village. The children are having a forced holiday"

1947 05 20

For what he described as a "horrible cowardly offence" - that of robbery with violence against an elderly Ely jeweller - Lord Chief Justice Goddard, at Cambs Assizes, sentenced a 21-year-old man to two months imprisonment and 12 strokes of the birch. The judge said "If I were merely to send you to prison I should have to send you to prison for a very long time. The best thing to do is to treat you like what you are - a thoroughly naughty boy - and give you something you will remember. I hope you will take it like a man"

1947 05 23

The manageress of an Ely cafe who bought 360 eggs from the proprietor of a grocers' business for the benefit of flood-workers who frequented her cafe at that time was fined £5 by Ely magistrates for obtaining the egg without the authority of the Ministry of Food. On April 16th the Divisional Enforcement Officer of the Ministry of Food visited the Kum-In Cafe with another official and asked for hot lunch. They were served with eggs, chips and sausage and noticed that other customers were

also being served with eggs. The manageress had purchased 360 eggs for the correct price of £3. The only authority she had for eggs was six - her allocation for the members of her family

1947 11 14

Members of the Great Ouse Catchment Board gave their approval to a revised Flood Protection Scheme estimated to cost £6,550,000. The Consulting Engineers proposed the cut-off channel should be taken from Denver to the River Lark with a small extension to pick up the river Kennet. They had also investigated suggestions for a pumping station at Ely and for an extension of the cut-off channel to Upware. The only comment was made by the Chairman who, replying to a query as to whether this scheme when carried out would prevent floods in the future said: "I should think the answer is yes as far as humanly possible"

1948 03 12

Seven witness from fenland came to Cambridge to plead for better bus facilities to link their isolated homesteads with Ely market, but their case was preceded by a long hearing and the Traffic commissioners had time only to listen to two of them before adjourning the proceedings. Those unable to be heard waited from 11am to 6.30 pm. Before the Commissioners were applications by William Washington of Littleport to operate new stage carriage services between Black Horse Drove and Home Farm Drove (Hundred Foot Bank) and Ely. The applications were objected to by the Eastern Counties Omnibus Company. The applications were designed to cater for the area of fenland between Littleport and Southery, which, while highly productive agriculturally, was very isolated. At present it was practically uncatered for by a bus service

1948 04 10

The recommendation that Cambridgeshire, the Isle of Ely, Huntingdonshire and the Soke of Peterborough should be grouped as one administrative council has already started tongues wagging in all areas. The proposals have been received with mixed feelings, and have provoked many questions. The Isle of Ely and Peterborough papers think March would be a good centre for the new authority. Cambridgeshire County Councillors may have other ideas!

1948 05 31

Through a countryside hinting at the rich promise of a fine harvest, town and country folk flocked into Ely on Saturday to break all attendance records for a County Show organised by the Cambs and Isle Agricultural Society. Some 24,000 people passed through the entrance gates into the forty acres of well-laid-out showground off the Downham Road. About £3,000 was taken in gate money. Over 1,000 animals were on view and eye-dazzling exhibits of machinery made the mechanically-minded farmer's mouth water, though delivery difficulties made much of the machinery a promise of good things to come rather than of good things of immediate availability

1948 06 04

A chapter of accident befell Miss Kay Stammers, one of Great Britain's two leading women tennis stars, when she went to Soham recently. The purpose of her visit was to "christen" a hard court presented to the town. Travelling from London by train Kay intended to get out at Cambridge, but overshot her target and found herself in Ely. She booked a taxi to take her back to Soham but it says little for the local knowledge of the Ely taxi drivers for the car went straight through the village - which has one of the longest main streets in Cambs - and on to Newmarket. Eventually she arrived at Soham, where a mystified crowd awaited, only three-quarters of an hour late

1948 06 21

A rider that all P.O.W.s should be given regular instructions on the rules of the road in this country was given by a jury returning a verdict of "Accidental death" on Hryhorij Wolanskj, an Ukrainian POW of 85 POW Satellite camp, Barton Fields, Ely. John Ada of St Mary's street, Ely, said he saw the Ukrainian completely ignore the "Halt" sign in Downham Road and came straight across the road without looking, crashing in to a red motor van. Victim had been in the Ely camp since January 1948. The Camp Commandant stated that his records showed Wolanskj had received instruction in road

safety at his previous base at Braintree. He must have known the meaning of the "Halt" sign as there was a large one just outside the camp

1948 11 24

Laundry girls from Haverhill and Ely travelled into Cambridge with their supporters to meet their Cambridge competitors in the first stage of a contest aimed at increasing the status of both the laundry girl and the laundry by each year crowning as "Queen Lorna" one who has been chosen as the most capable worker to represent the industry. The winner was a Cambridge laundress, Miss Vera Morley, a 22-year old girl with six years laundry experience, a packing room hand employed by the Coldham Model Laundry, Coldham's Lane. At the end of the judging she was adorned by the mayoress with the much-coveted band bearing the name: "Lorna". She also received a cheque for £5

1949 04 02

The Lamb Hotel, Ely, came very near to destruction when fire broke out in a linen room on the first floor. The room was almost completely gutted. At one time there was a danger of the fire spreading to a ground-floor store cupboard but fortunately flames were checked before they gained a good hold. Sub-officer Church of Ely fire service said: "In another five minutes we should not have got a hold on the fire at all. Doors and windows were kept closed by the occupants, and it saved the place"

1949 04 22

Albert Lavender, greengrocer of Ely, said he kept the cabin of a motor lorry on land at Middle Fen. The windscreen was on the cabin last week but on Tuesday was missing. P.C. Vincent told of seeing the defendant at Webb's scrapyard in Stuntney road. He at first denied all knowledge of the windscreen but later stated that he took it to make a new window for the rear of his car. He was fined £2

1949 09 23

Miss Janet Hubbard of Ely, Britain's new Railway Queen, was given a tumultuous send-off when she left Ely railway station in preparation for her crowning at Manchester. She was the centre of a pleasing little ceremony in the stationmaster's office, which was crowded with railway employees who gathered to pay their congratulations. All felt proud that Britain's railway queen had been chosen from Ely. Mr H.H. Smith, stationmaster, told her "You must be the envy of some thousands of young railway ladies in this country. I am sure Ely is most honoured, and your mother and father must be very proud of your success". Railway employees thronged the platform to proclaim their best wishes.

1949 12 23

An incident at Ely Quayside following a naval reunion dinner had a sequel in court when a taxi driver appeared for alleged misconduct. Police said that following a dinner at the Cutter inn defendant was waiting outside with his taxi. He allowed seven passengers to get in the vehicles, which was constructed to carry four. He then attempted to reverse where there was a decline to the river, but his brakes failed to hold and the taxi over-ran the river bank. Two of the passengers opened the door and stepped into the river. One had to be rescued and given artificial respiration in the Cutter Inn

1950 01 07

Results for the 2,600 growers who supply the Ely Beet Sugar Factory have been poorer for many years in the campaign which has ended after a run of only 87 days, the shortest for a long time. Not only was the yield per acre of just over 8.3 tons low, but the sugar content of beet handled averaged no more than 14.73%, the lowest for the factory in the history of the corporation.

1950 02 10

Major Gordon Fowler had a career which most people only dream about. He went to New Zealand at the age of 16 and had been at one time or another a wagon driver, lumberman, cowboy and policeman. In 1948 he was awarded an honorary MA degree by Cambridge University for his archaeological research work in East Anglia. During his 25 years at Ely Sugar Beet factory he saw the

local development of a crop producing 50,000 tons in the first campaign to the present level of approx 250,000 tons.

1950 03 03

Work began a few days ago in digging out a bog oak, believed to be the biggest yet found in the Ely area. It was discovered about five years ago on Pymoor common when Mr A. Thompson, of Oxlade, took over the land for agricultural purposes. It is about 30 yards long, 12 feet in circumference and embedded four foot in the ground.

1950 03 08

A strong attack on Ely council's housing policy is made in the Ely Rural Deanery Magazine's Prickwillow notes. It claims the housing difficulties will make it necessary for Mr W. Gathercole to give up the position of church caretaker after 20 years because the housing committee are unwilling to give them a house near the church. "It will be an injustice and scandal. The most insuperable difficulty of obtaining an organ blower will also arise, as this family supplies the organ blower. Church caretakers and organ blowers are almost unobtainable these days" the article says

1950 04 03

For 25 years the name of E.R. Blount has been actively associated with the Ely Beet Sugar Factory, first under the original Anglo-Dutch organisation and subsequently as agriculturist since the formation of the British Sugar Corporation some 15 years ago. He has witnessed the development of a crop yielding 18,000 tons of sugar beet in 1925 to the present annual level of a quarter of a million tons. The 2,500 growers who now annually supply the factory will miss the familiar signature which has appeared on something like 100,000 cheques amounting to £20 million.

1950 04 18

A crowd of over 5,000 gathered in glorious sunshine for the first open meeting on the new racing circuit at Bedwell Hey, near Ely. It was run jointly by the C.U. Auto Club and the Ely Motorcycle club and was open to all members of the British Motor Cycle Racing Club. The course record was set by George Brown on a 500 cc works Vincent, touching 98 mph on the 500-yard back straight, but his machine seized up half way through.

1950 05 05

The Secretary of State for Air has said it has now been decided that Mepal would not be retained for RAF use and the airfield had been allocated for long-term agricultural use. The Ely Rural Council had been requested to take over responsibility for housing the Poles who lived in the hutted camp to the East of the aerodrome.

1950 07 20

Messrs Hall, Cutlack & Harlock Ltd, the brewery, Fore Hill, Ely and the Huntingdon Breweries Ltd, Huntingdon, have amalgamated and the new company will be known as the East Anglian Breweries Ltd. The registered office will be at Ely. All the directors are directors of the amalgamated companies.

1950 08 16

The urban district of Ely has been without water supply due to a serious break in the pumping main at Soham. A limited supply was made available to the RAF Hospital but the vast majority are having to rely on soft water caught in rain tanks. The manager of the Jam factory said: "I have 20 tons of plums going rotten. I have had to send for a fire tender to get water into the boilers. We can't do a thing because we live on steam"

1950 08 26

Mr Ralph Starr, twice Mayor of Cambridge & once described as 'the best-known man in the town', died at his home. Few men have given so much of their life in the service of the town. He was first elected to the Council in 1904 and served continuously till November 1945. At a time when there

were few Labour members of the council he was looked upon as the 'People's Mayor'. As a young man he entered the photographic studios of Messrs Hills & Saunders where he remained for eight years before starting the business to become well known in Cambridge & Ely as 'Starr & Rignall'

1950 09 20

The Ely beet sugar factory begins this season's campaign and over the greater part of the area from which beet are drawn heavy yields are anticipated, which may even constitute a record for the factory. In view of the very large tonnage of sugar beet to be handled, it is felt imperative to make the earliest possible start to afford growers every opportunity of keeping up to date with their early deliveries, reducing the risk of losses due to frost and other seasonable conditions.

1951 03 03

A Littleport potato crisp manufacturer, carrying on business at Angle Works, Ely, told the Bankruptcy court he had started at Ely in March 1949; in July 1950 he was went with his wife for a holiday on a Mediterranean cargo boat. The business was left in the hands of his father and a friend, neither of whom was experienced. He came home to find the business closed down and most of the assets disposed of.

1951 03 13

A journey, in many ways reminiscent of those made during the war, was repeated by members of the Romas Concert Party. This time it was not through the black-out to some remote RAF site or searchlight emplacement, but to the Cutter Inn, Ely, where they celebrated their reunion dinner. Over 500 shows had been presented for the forces between 1940 and D-Day. They had overcome transport difficulties by commandeering a meat van with a pheasant on the side.

1951 08 09

A lorry driver was killed and an aeroplane crew of two seriously injured when a plane crashed at Ely. The Harvard two-seater from RAF Feltwell, first struck the top of a forge owned by Messrs Brand Brothers, then careered across the street, ending up with the tail and part of the body in St Mary's street, and the engine and forepart of the aircraft in a showroom belonging to Messrs T.W. Nice, garage proprietors. During its journey it hit a lorry owned by Darby's Sand and Gravel; its cab was hurtled into the showroom and the driver buried under the engine. One wing of the plane came off and overturned a car, the other ploughed into the middle of the road.

1951 09 27

The cause of the aeroplane crash in St Mary's Street, Ely, in August when a lorry driver was killed instantly and a pilot instructor received injuries which proved fatal, will always remain a mystery. At the resumed inquest the surviving member of the Harvard training plane's crew of two could remember nothing from the time when he was asked if he would like to try some new aerobatics to regaining consciousness in the R.A.F. hospital several hours later. A verdict of misadventure was returned.

1952 02 02

There is serious trouble at Ely Cathedral. The ravages of the death watch beetle in the nave roof have just been made good but now comes the news that the beetle has been doing much more serious damage to the Cathedral's famous lantern. It is thought that restoration may cost as much as £20,000.

1952 03 15

A world-wide appeal for £60,000 has been launched to cover the cost of repairs of considerable damage caused by the Death Watch Beetle to Ely Cathedral. It was last October when renovation of the Nave roof was nearly completed that evidence of the beetle's ravages was discovered in the Octagon and Lantern. Now further examination has revealed other damage to the roofs of the beautiful Lady Chapel, Choir, belfry and transepts. In some cases to replace or strengthen honey-

combed oak beams great masses of lead will have to be lifted and completely re-cast. It is expected that work will take four or five years.

1952 03 21

Claude Hulbert, the loveable comedian, heads the cast at the Arts Theatre, Cambridge in his brother, Jack's production of the famous farce, "Nothing but the Truth", which ran for 578 performances in London. The Hulberts have many associations with the area. Sons of an Ely doctor both came to Caius College and were enthusiastic members of the Footlights Dramatic Club. Jack appeared at the Arts in "The Hulbert Follies" with his famous wife, Cicely Courtneidge, in July 1941, while Claude had a notable success in "Worth a Million" when he co-starred with Edmund Gwen and Ruby Miller.

1952 12 09

Mr Donald McCullough appealed in "The Week's Good Cause" on behalf of the Ely Cathedral Restoration Appeal. He told listeners: "Ely Cathedral has been attacked by the Death-watch beetle and unless we can act quickly it will fall down. I climbed up the lantern and stood there amongst the oak beams and I saw where they had been eaten away by this devilish insect. I actually felt the wood crumbling in my hand, and it was a horrible feeling. The good and generous people had just raised £80,000 to restore their parish churches and increase the incomes of their clergy when they made this awful discovery"

1953 01 30

Ely Beet Sugar Factory has come to the end of another successful campaign, dealing with 316,000 tons of beet in 116 days, including a two-day stop when the boiler broke down, and produced over 44,000 tons of sugar, 7,000 tons of molasses and nearly 23,000 tons of dried beet pulp. It is a tribute to the farmers to say that in spite of all the handicaps of frost, snow and water-logged fields, less than half of one per cent of the beets remain unharvested

1953 10 19

For as long as Ely Cathedral stands so will the memory remain of 1,700 men and women of Cambridgeshire who gave their lives in the last war. Over 3,000 people joined in the dedication of the County War Memorial. Earlier hundreds had packed themselves four deep to watch one of the most impressive displays this ancient city had ever seen including a yellow and blue mass of 100 British Legion standards with 900 men and women from practically every branch in the county.

1954 06 03

Standen and Son, the manufacturers of Sugar Beet Harvesters, appreciate the needs of the small grower for a compact harvester costing about £300. Prototype machines were built and put to work in the fields where they operated for weeks on end. Often they were taken back into the workshops at night for modification and be in the fields again next morning. So the 'Junior' harvester was born and the firm's works at Ely and St Ives are busy producing the machine for this year's crop.

1954 07 03

Huntingdon will probably lose one of its oldest industries with the cessation of the brewing of beer. For more than 300 years the brewery in the High Street has been active. Now it will stop. The score of women in the bottling department and the men on the brewery staff will be found other employment. None of the office staff will be affected and the off-licence premises will carry on as usual. Malting will also be continued and the dozen lorry drivers and loaders will not be affected. It will be used as a distribution centre for the Ely produced beers. Throughout the century many amalgamations have taken place but in 1950 they culminated in the combination between the Huntingdon Brewery and Messrs Hall, Cutlack and Harlock of Ely to form the East Anglian Breweries Ltd.

1954 08 11

The combination of perfect weather conditions, a record crowd of 4,000 people, an extended and improved circuit and some first-class riding made the scramble held on the Old Bank, Littleport the most successful yet staged by the Ely Motor Cycle Club. Jack Hubbard was a firm favourite as were

Bud Ekins and Vern Hancock, two Americans riding under the Ely colours. John Baker, fast making a name for himself, also rode quite well

1954 09 09

The 'Kum-In Café' sited on the Cambridge Road corner at Ely has changed hands as a result of an auction at the White Hart Hotel when it was sold to Mr F.C. Leavis of Cambridge for £1,650. The café premises, 43-47 St Mary's Street were offered together with a flat and houses with a large walk-in yard. But a modern residence, 'Balmoral' at Newmarket Road, Fordham including a garage, garden and engineer's workshop was withdrawn from sale at £2,700

1955 01 21

Ely is the only town which has done nothing at all in the way of providing parking facilities and motorists should boycott it in order to get the situation improved, the Chief Constable said. On Market Day the High Street was choc-a-block with cars parked bumper to bumper down both sides, leaving a narrow channel for vehicles to pass down the middle. It was very dangerous for ladies with prams and pedestrians trying to cross. It was the same in Market Street and in Nutholt Lane, the main approach to the sugar beet factory, they found cattle floats parked forcing many drivers to get on the pavement when meeting approaching vehicles. "Half of Ely is taken up by the Cathedral and its grounds and I have only the other half to use for parking and this is comprised of narrow streets", he complained.
55 01 21c

1955 01 28

The Bishop's Palace at Ely was requisitioned by the War Office in 1943 for use as a convalescent home and since then the Bishop has been living in the old Deanery. Now the Church Commissions have agreed to purchase the Deanery and make it the official residence. They will also take over full responsibility for the Palace, now used as a school for crippled girls. There will be regrets but it is no longer appropriate for a Minister of the Gospel to live in such a house as the Palace. 55 01 28

1955 03 04

Ely Rural Council has received a letter from Schweppes, the London mineral water manufacturers asking whether there were any suitable sites for light industrial purposes. They are interesting in acquiring a factory in the Cambridge area and had been advised by a Board of Trade official that Ely would be a suitable place. They would require approximately three acres of ground suitable for erecting a single storey factory to bottling and distributing soft drinks. The Vice Chairman asked any member with any suggestions to let the Clerk know before he sent a reply. 55 03 04b

1955 04 01

On the four main roads leading into Ely are 'Welcome to Ely' signs but some practical joker has decided to give a different twist to two of them. Immediately above the 'Welcome' sign has been hung a cardboard notice bearing the words 'If you want it you are'. Below it another sign reads 'We are fed up with it'. The notices have been removed by the police 55 04 01b

1955 10 24

Ely Sailing Club's timber-built headquarters on the Prickwillow Road was completely destroyed by fire together with chairs and crockery which had been loaned for a supper to celebrate the end of the sailing season. This is the second time the club has lost its building. During the bad weather of 1949-50 it disappeared through the subsidence of the bank on which it was standing overlooking Roswell Pits. 55 10 24d

1955 11 07

In the dark days of the last war Ely Cathedral stood out as a prominent landmark for returning bombers. Thus it was fitting that it should be chosen as the place for a memorial window to remember the 19,000 airmen who did not come back. High-ranking officers and some 2,000 relatives of the

fallen joined in the commemoration during which four rolls of honour containing the names of fallen aircrew, many of them New Zealanders, were presented for preservation. 55 11 07a

1955 12 02

The Woodpecker Café in Butchers Row, Ely, has again been refused a music licence. It was thought to be too near the Cathedral precincts but the Dean had no objection. Even on fair days the noise from the amusements was barely audible and the sound from the music making machine would not be heard by residents. There would be a volume control that could only be touched by the staff and be kept to a modified pitch. 55 12 02a

1956 01 14

All previous records were beaten at the National Boat Show, Olympia. Granta Floating Boats of Cottenham have taken an order from a Finnish company for 100 of their new outboard motors and also sold 50 of their canoes – the works should be busy for a long time to come. Appleyard Lincoln and Co boat builders of Ely booked their entire hire fleet for most of the summer and a revolutionary new boat developed by Aero Research of Duxford is to be mass produced in America. 56 01 14a & b

1956 05 23

Ely Sailing Club has opened its third new clubhouse on the site of one that was burnt down. Its original headquarters disappeared into Roswell waters during the winter of 1950-51. The Commodore, Dr K.S. Maurice-Smith, said "It is only five months since we were paddling here in charred wood and rubble". Now they have a well-equipped and comfortable building which has taken all their available resources. 56 05 23c

1956 05 25

Through winding country lanes, townspeople and rural folk went to Ely for the opening of the first two-day county show for 50 years. As they travelled they passed fields of growing crops urgently in need of rain. The show has a reputation for being one of the finest in the agricultural calendar but had become so vast that visitors have found it difficult to take in all aspects. Now they have much more time and over 20,000 visitors attended the second day. 56 05 25b, 56 05 28a, 56 05 28b

1956 07 16

The Princess Royal visited Ely R.A.F. Hospital. She toured the operating theatre, chapel, television room, library and wards, where she spoke to Mrs Eliza Bowles and Hilda Joyce of Ely. In the children's ward three small patients played contentedly with their toys; the youngest was three-year old Geoffrey Beswick, son of a sergeant stationed at Upwood. When reporters entered he called out 'Hello, mans. Look', holding up a rubber toy. 56 07 16a

1957 02 04

In a ceremony steeped in tradition, the Rt Rev Noel Baring Hudson was inducted, installed and enthroned as the 64th Lord Bishop of Ely. There were scenes of great dignity and solemnity while the magnificent robes of ecclesiastical dignitaries presented a vivid and colourful picture. Crowds watched the arrival of the Chairman (Coun W. Ruane) and members of Ely Urban Council formally received by the Dean (the Very Rev C.P. Hankey) before the procession of 230 parish priests from all corners of the diocese. 57 02 04

1958 08 01

In 1950 Huntingdon Brewery amalgamated with Hall, Cutlack and Harlock of Ely to form East Anglian Breweries. Now it will merge with Stewart and Patteson. There was disagreement over payment to four directors for loss of office. But they were entitled to compensation for fees they would have received but for the reorganisation. 57 08 01g

1957 10 22

Ely High School for Girls opened – 57 10 22a

1957 12 10

The recent amalgamation between East Anglian Breweries of Ely and Steward and Patterson of Norwich, will benefit both, Colonel Cutlack believes. He was relieved that the business built up by his grandfather, father and others should continue. It gave employees a sense of security at a time when the vast majority of small breweries were being swallowed up by larger companies. 57 12 10a

1958 01 15

Ely Cathedral has now raised the £60,000 it needs to pay for the cost of repairing extensive death watch beetle damage. After six years the last of the sixty 'wooden beetles', each representing £1,000, was removed from the board at the West Door. But another £2,000 is required due to rising costs in wages and materials and work still continues to re-cover the Lantern with lead. 58 01 15

1958 08 22

Nearly 300 people took part in a six mile march from Ely to a rocket base at Mepal. Young or old, MP, clerk or labourer, all had one purpose - to denounce the Government's decision to establish rocket sites. Labour candidate Robert Davies said it was absurd to make a secret of where the bases are. Rocket hide-outs are open secrets. You may not be able to mention them but you can go and see where they are. But MP Major Harry Legge-Bourke said it was running very close to official secrets and nobody knows what Mepal might be used for. 58 08 22b, 58 08 25 & a

1958 09 24

More than 200 people crowded into the WI Hall when the BBC's "Have a Go" programme was broadcast live from Ely. Wilfred Pickles met contestants including Clifford Cousins, Raymond Bailey, William Rayment, Mrs Florence Oakey and Colonel J.G.A. Beckett, chairman of Ely Urban District Council. 58 09 24a

1958 10 03

There were cries of 'shame' when Peter Cadogan of Cambridge told the Labour Party Conference that since a march from Ely to the rocket base near Mepal, Americans alarmed by the demonstration had 'given certain English employees to understand that if they want to hold their jobs they cannot be members of the Labour Party'. It was apparent that the marchers had the company of the American F.B.I.: English people demonstrating on English soil were under the hostile surveillance of the secret service of a foreign power. One man, the organiser of the march, had already resigned. 58 10 03

1958 10 03

Standen's factory, Ely opened – 58 10 03a

1958 12 20

Ely Sugar Beet factory has again run into mechanical trouble. This time an alternator in the turbine of the generator by which the factory produces its own electricity burnt out, causing a halt to production of nearly four days. They are now using a small stand-by set which became obsolete after the new boiler house was built seven years ago. In the course of a campaign they process about 400,000 tons of beet and up to the time of the breakdown they had dealt with just over half of this. 58 12 20

1959 04 16

Looking like a gigantic cigar, a tarpaulin-covered 'Thor' rocket – minus its warhead of course – passed through Ely en route to the Mepal rocket base. The 90-foot transporter with pilot drivers at the rear to ensure negotiation of the highway, was escorted by the R.A.F. police. Preceding it, to clear the streets of all other traffic, were civil police. The 'Thor', produced in America, has a range of at least 1,500 miles. 59 04 16a

1959 04 23

The Air Ministry says the warning light on Ely Cathedral is no longer needed now that the airfield at Witchford is closed. Aircraft from Mildenhall are routed well above the height of the tower. But many

people have been disturbed by extremely low-flying aircraft during the hours of darkness and US aircraft might not be fully aware of the geography of the country. Many other cathedrals had lights on them and if there was the faintest possibility of danger they should be replaced. 59 04 23

1959 05 01

Ely jam factory in Bray's Lane is to close but will reopen for the production of canned fruit and vegetables. The news came as a bombshell to the 120 employees. It was first opened in 1936 by St Martin (Eastern) Ltd. Two years ago T.G. Ticklers leased it and closed down their factory at Grimsby. Those premises have been re-equipped and are now capable of making three times the amount of preserves that can be produced at Ely. Key personnel will be transferred to Grimsby where the manager is Arthur Strevens, who was formerly in charge at Ely. 59 05 01f

1959 06 22

Princess Margaret, Colonel-in-Chief of the Suffolk Regiment, visited Ely Cathedral to dedicate a Roll of Honour of the names of the 20 officers and 740 other ranks of the Cambridgeshire Regiment who did not return from the ill-fated Malayan campaign 17 long years ago. She was very excited to see the Cathedral at last because she had glimpsed it from the train but never before been inside. 59 06 22 & a

1959 06 27

Ely first woman JP – Mrs Covill – dies – 59 06 27

1959 06 30

Ely Cathedral repairs needed roof – 59 06 30

1959 07 23

Arthur Tucker, Secretary of the Cambridgeshire Regiment Old Comrades Association, carried the Cambridgeshire's roll of honour up the nave of Ely Cathedral at the dedication ceremony. Through his years of internment at Changhi Prison in Singapore he had kept a little book under the floorboards containing the names of all the men in the 2nd Battalion and any casualties. Had it been found it would have meant his instant death. He used it to correct the list compiled by the War Office – half the chaps they had named were very much alive. 59 07 23b

1959 07 27

Thieves who broke into Ely Cathedral forced the door of the strong room cupboard in the Verger's vestry with a crowbar and got away with articles of church plate. Amongst the items taken was a silver-gilt gem-studded chalice and silver ornaments from the tops of cruets in which communion wine and water are kept. It is understood they are not of any great value. But they dropped a bag containing about £5. 59 07 27 & 28a

1959 08 14

A small gang of men who, in fair weather and foul, tend the two miles of track from Ely railway station to the Lynn cross gates at Adelaide have received awards for the best-maintained class 'B' track. They are ganger L.W. Akred, lengthmen G. Clark, R. Harrison and S. Thorby and sub-ganger H.V. Pearson. Permanent way inspectors have their own competition which was won by Mr S. Ginn of Ely who has control of 14 gangs between Ely and Stoke Ferry. 59 08 14a

1959 08 221

Miss E.A. Ogden, has safely delivered, unaided, 50 babies a year since she came to Ely in 1939 – about one a week. The tiniest weighed only 3lb, the biggest was 11lb. One of two district nurses covering Witchford, Stuntney and Adelaide, Miss Ogden is quite modest about the whole affair. She points out that it is quite commonplace for midwives to deal with so many youngsters. But six Ely doctors gave a party in the grounds of Dr J.B. Bamford's home to celebrate the milestone. 59 08 21a

1959 10 06

Ely High Barns Saxon burial – 59 10 06

1959 11 19

Hundreds of pigeons which roost in the west tower of Ely Cathedral have died, probably through fowl pest. A number were seen to be almost lifeless and presenting a pathetic sight with their heads rolling from side to side. Some were picked up in the streets but the majority have died in the tower or among the roof turrets. Workmen have spent much time collecting the bodies in a wheelbarrow and destroying them. 59 11 19b

1959 11 27

Ely Cathedral stolen plate recovered – 59 11 27e

1959 12 04

Ely football club plans Downham Road pitch scuppered – 59 12 04d

1960 01 07

Frank 'Wilkie' Wilkinson arrived at the King's School, Ely, as a young teacher in 1922 intending to stay for just one year. But he remained for a record of 37 years as an English master, games master, sports coach, librarian, groundsman, head of the dramatic and debating societies and organiser of athletics, tennis, fives and badminton. He also captained the county football club and played cricket for the MCC. As secretary of the Old Boys' Club he keeps in touch with over 600 former pupils who wish him happiness and prosperity in his retirement. 60 01 07c

1960 01 18

Every visitor to Ely Cathedral notices its pigeons. They wheel round the top of the West Tower, sit in rows along the roof and make nests in the Galilee Porch. But then came orders to destroy them. Fowl pest was rampant and the discovery of a number of dead pigeons in the precincts became news: they were dying in scores. Wheelbarrows carried the corpses away. But they had not died of fowl pest, they had poisoned themselves by stealing corn sown in the fields which had been chemically treated against grubs. They will return buy for the present kitchen gardens in the neighbourhood may be allowed to produce peas and beans this year at least. 60 01 18

1960 01 20

Supermarkets are undercutting smaller shops – an identical tin of coffee varies by as much as sixpence. But Mr L.C. Cherry of Milton Road has banded together with several other grocers to buy goods in bulk, enabling him to give customers special offers. A high percentage of orders are now taken over the telephone, credit is given and goods delivered. At Sutton Mr L.F. Lindsell has seen no decline since the opening of a supermarket at Ely: the customer saves a bus fare, get good service and can always come back and complain. Several housewives praised the supermarket but others said it tempted them to buy rather more than they first intended 60 01 20

1960 05 19

When the St Martin's factory in Bray's Lane, Ely, closed down as a preserves producing centre a year ago it was hoped to re-open it as a canning factory. Now comes a rumour that this will happen in four months' time. The Company Secretary would not comment on suggestions that a labour force of 70 (mostly women) would be required but inquiries at the Ministry of Labour's Ely offices revealed they are compiling a register of suitable labour to offer if and when production commences. 60 05 19

1960 09 05

Cambridge Steam Laundry on Cherry Hinton Road was founded in 1880 making it the oldest in Cambridge. Coldham Model Laundry purchased a motor van in 1910 becoming the first with motor transport. Ely and District Laundry is housed in a modern, spacious building and employs 85 personnel handling 52,000 garments a week. It has canteen facilities with free tea twice a day and 'Music While You Work' – a great favourite with younger employees. Homewash is the 'bouncing

baby' of local laundries, starting very humbly on V.J. Day 1945 when two recently-demobbed ex-Servicemen started to 'take in washing'. 60 09 05a b c

1960 09 28

Ely's new railway station room provides plush comfort. Gone are the drab walls, the hard bench type seats, big tables in the centre of the room and the lack of warmth. The old, smoking fireplaces have been replaced by infra-red push-button heaters which stay on for fifteen minutes. Now passengers can rest in an atmosphere of ease and near luxury. There is fluorescent lighting, tasteful interior finishing and beautiful lithographs including 'The road to Thaxted' by Edward Bawden. It is the finest waiting room in the Eastern Region 60 09 28a

1960 10 27

Many people believe that the future prosperity of Ely will depend on the introduction of light industry. Now Father Guy Pritchard of the Catholic Church of St Etheldreda has inaugurated a campaign of prayer seeking God's help to attract firms. Other churches will join in and Ely Chamber of Trade is also keen. Without doubt some people would be opposed to light industry in the belief that Ely should remain a quiet Cathedral city. One of the biggest issues would be a labour force but children leaving school are unlikely to find employment locally and many of the estimated 800 people who now leave five days a week to work in Cambridge could be kept in Ely 60 10 27

1960 11 03

The City of Ely Bowls Club, which is less than 50 strong, has repaid a loan of £950 for improvements to the pavilion and now started re-turfing the green for the first time since it was formed in 1925. This zealous and enterprising club aims to be one of the finest in the county and hopes to emulate St Neots, probably the most successful in the area and the only one which has a waiting list for membership. 60 11 03a

1960 12 08

Ely's Town Crier, James Ankin is the last of a long line of men who have held this ancient office. It is certain that no new Crier will be seen so no longer will the stentorian cry of 'Oyez. Oyez' be heard to the accompaniment of a vigorously-rung handbell. He used to announce horse fairs, pleasure fairs and other functions but there is a rapidly diminishing need for this old style custom and it is twelve months since he last 'cried'. During the war ringing bells was strictly prohibited, but there was nothing to stop him hanging an old dustbin lid or rattling tin cans. Now he has decided to call it a day. His predecessor, known as 'Blind Wayman' was the proud possessor of a long black coat (complete with brass buttons) and a bowler hat, given to him by a benefactor. Despite his affliction he had no difficulty making proclamations as he read from Braille scripts 60 12 08a

1961 01 04

A 67ft long tree trunk recovered from the River Ouse at Adelaide has been revealed as a bog oak about 4,500 years old. It came to light during underwater protective work to the river bridge and was dragged to the bank by two bulldozers. Because of its length, straightness and thickness it was thought to have been one of the trees brought to Ely to construct the Octagon. But it was found in peaty soil and the position in which the oak was discovered did not in the 14th-century form part of the river bed. Now Prof H. Godwin has confirmed the date through radiocarbon-dating 61 01 04a

1961 01 08

History of banking at Ely & Downham Market – 61 01 08

1961 04 06

Ely petition against junior training centre in Lisle Lane for mentally disordered children – 61 04 06

1961 08 17

Visitors to Ely have commented on the untidiness of a piece of land to the west of the Cathedral. Grass stands two feet tall around old and cracked gravestones, shrubs are fast covering the ground and

waste paper, blown from the streets, lies behind the railings. Now it will be taken over by the Urban District Council and opened up as garden and place of recreation, looking similar to Palace Green almost opposite 61 08 17b

1961 09 21

Ely RAF Hospital has been awarded the trophy for the best airmen's mess in the UK. The competition is judged on the outside appearance of the dining hall, its décor and cleanliness as well as the state of the kitchen. For a small unit the size of Ely this is an outstanding achievement. There is generally a choice of four different savoury courses and sweets. But the most revolutionary development is the availability of wine before starting the meal itself. The days of the clumsy mug and ugly tea urn have gone and now Servicemen and women have elegant glass cups and teapots. In the centre of the dining hall there is even a miniature goldfish pond 61 09 21a

1961 12 12

Ely planning proposals envisage a new by-pass to the west of the city and the allocation of 33 acres of land for industrial purposes. Silver Street would be widened and the present route past the Cathedral closed to through traffic. There should be a new road linking Lynn and Prickwillow roads to provide direct connection with the sugar beet factory. About 1,000 people leave Ely to work elsewhere and full benefit is not taken of the numerous visitors. The plan set out to remedy these deficiencies. 61 12 12

1961 12 15

Ely Market Place underground car park proposal 61 12 15

1962 01 11

Cottages in West Fen Road, Ely should be preserved – 61 01 12

1962 01 12

Oliver Cromwell House, Ely – feature – 61 01 12

1962 02 21

A site in West Fen Road Ely, where Nissen huts once stood, will become a new Council estate that could well become the housing showpiece of the Eastern Counties. Ambitious in outlook and almost revolutionary in concept, Priors Court will provide 162 homes together with 143 garages. In addition two parking areas will give space for 41 cars to allow for visitors. The emphasis on the modern need for garages is only one unusual aspect. Another is the high regard for road safety which will keep children and traffic completely apart. 62 02 21

1962 02 23

The small puddle-jumping aeroplane is becoming part of the modern scene. Wing Commander K.H. Wallis, a member of the well-known Ely family, imported a Benson autogyro in 1957 and has carried out an intensive modification programme. The result is a practical single seat machine known as the Beagle-Wallis WA-116, far-removed from the original American design. It will leap into the air in about 25 yards and climb very steeply at over 1,000 feet per minute before landing in half the length of a tennis court 62 02 23e

1962 03 02

Six barges, each 60 feet long, were towed down the River Cam from Ely to the Pike and Eel landing stage at Chesterton, where lorries were waiting to collect them. The 10-ton barges had been hired from a Hampshire firm and were used during the Ely sugar beet campaign. But the cranes needed to hoist them out of the river were too large to go on the Ely landing stage so the barges were brought to the nearest suitable spot. A police escort was provided through Cambridge streets for the lorries with their lengthy loads. 62 03 02c

1962 03 13

Work is underway on a large new factory and other facilities which will greatly increase the scope of boat building by Appleyard Lincoln & Co. of Ely. The project started last year and is now nearly completed. All kinds of conventional boat building are undertaken by the firm which has been in existence under its present name since 1945. Previously a boat building firm had been established at Ely in 1860. 62 03 13c

1962 05 31

The Quay Brewery, Broad Street, Ely has been sold by auction to Robinson and Gimbert, the building contractors. Part of the site will be used for residential development. Steward and Patterson have moved into new premises so the brewery was surplus to their requirements. 62 05 31

1962 06 05

A site at the junction of Bray's Lane and the Market Place at Ely has remained vacant since it was bought about 15 years ago with the erection of a new cinema in mind. At present it accommodates the headquarters of the St John Ambulance Brigade who are moving to New Barns Road. It has now been purchased by a London Company, Central and Provincial Properties, who hope to erect a retail store not more than two stories high 62 06 05

1962 06 30

About 250 people were ferried across the River Ouse at Ely for an open day staged by Appleyard, Lincoln and Company the boatbuilding company which was formed in 1944 from a business which had its origins in the early 1800's. The new factory has increased facilities for the manufacture of fibre-glass craft for sale and hire, expanding their fleet of ten cabin cruisers operating on the fenland waterways. 62 06 30a

1962 07 14

Ely Co-operative Society's shop in Market Street suffered thousands of pounds worth of damage when fire broke out in the upstairs drapery and fashion departments. It started in a small store beneath a staircase, then burned through the ceiling. Large quantities of clothing were destroyed or damaged by smoke and the heat became so intense that plastic coat-hangers melted. Business continues in the grocery, haberdashery and hardware sections on the ground floor. 62 07 14

1962 08 10

Brewery dray visits Ely brewery – 62 08 10b

1962 08 25

An Ely couple and their six children have been brought together under one roof again after the husband, wife and two youngest children spent the past week living in a small tent on the side of the road. But their new house is to be demolished to make way for a new old people's estate on the corner of Downham and West Fen Roads, Ely. Mr Frederick Goldsmith and his family lost their home when they were evicted from a tied cottage on a Prickwillow farm. Since then Mr Goldsmith has biked 1,000 miles in search of a new job 62 08 25

1962 09 11

One-way traffic past Ely cathedral proposal – 62 09 11

1962 09 11

A new bridge may be constructed across the river at Ely to serve as an access to Appleyard Lincoln's Babylon site. The river was a major attraction but there were few amenities for mooring and the encouragement of visitors, an Inquiry was told. The Cathedral chapter want only one-way traffic down the Gallery. It would halve the amount of vibration which occurs when almost anything apart from a perambulator passes the west front. The tower was not very safe: it was extended upwards and an 80-foot top put on without the foundations being strengthened. The alternative route was along Silver Street 62 09 11

1962 10 03

Ely Corn Exchange redevelopment proposals – pics – 62 10 03 & a

1962 10 31

St Mary's Lodge and Isle of Ely County Council Care Home was established nine years ago at no.44 St Mary's Street Ely to accommodate 24 elderly men and women. It expanded into the adjoining building in 1959 and now both are being linked to form one complete unit housing 44. The home offers well-furnished bedrooms, comfortable sitting rooms and lounges fitted with wireless and television 62 10 31

1962 11 02

Sir Will Spens, former Master of Corpus and wartime regional defence commissioner dies at Ely - 62 11 02a

1962 11 26

One-way traffic is being introduced at Minster Place at the Gallery, Ely, as a first step towards complete closure of the road that goes past Ely Cathedral. The return flow will be along St Mary's Street and Silver Street which will be widened for two-way traffic. This will take away heavy lorries carrying beet to the sugar factory which detract from the peacefulness and dignity of the Cathedral. Other improvements include the clearance of disused and unsightly gravestones on the Cathedral's north side and their replacement by pleasant lawns 62 11 26

1962 11 28

Standens of Ely, agricultural machinery taken over by Dental Manufacturing Co – 62 11 28

1962 12 01

Col G.L. Archer funeral service at Ely Cathedral – 62 12 01c

1962 12 27

Ely Youth Hostel's success is 'spectacular' and by September the Eastern Regional YHA recorded over 1,000 overnights 62 12 27

1962 12 28

A tradition which has existed for 115 years passed quietly into history at Ely when the Corn Exchange was used for the last time as a corn market, the purpose for which it was built in 1847. Recently purchased by a London development company, it is scheduled to be replaced by a modern shopping centre. Only a handful of farmers, corn merchants and representatives of seed, feeding stuffs, fertilisers, oil and seed companies turned up for the building's last two-hour use as an indoor market. Before the war as many as 300 people from all parts of the eastern counties and from London congregated at the Corn Exchange every Thursday. Mr Frank King, the custodian, recalled: "65 years ago, Broad Street used to be packed with people coming off the trains to the markets. Admission to the market cost farmers 3d (1p) a week, or 7s.6d. (37p) a year", said Mr Harry Sale a Cambridge corn merchant whose association with the market started 41 years ago. Stand holders paid £3.5s. (£3.25) a year, walking merchants – those who did not have stands - £1.6s. (£1.30) a year, and merchants who visited occasionally 1s (5p) a week. While in the past sellers and buyers turned up in their hundreds, the average attendance in the last five or six years has dwindled to between 30 and 40. From next Thursday corn market activities are being transferred less than 100 yards across the street, to the club room at the rear of the Club Hotel. The Corn Exchange will continue in use for the time being for a variety of events. It has been the setting for dinners, political meetings, wrestling, boxing and darts tournaments. 62 12 28a

1963 02 16

Darts is still a popular sport which appeals to all classes. The Star Brewery League began 30 years ago and is a very lively concern with 300 registered competitors in its 20 clubs. George Woolley of

‘The Hoops’, Long Stanton is one of their leading performers but ‘The Jubilee’, ‘Haymakers’ and ‘Five Bells’ have all won the championship in recent years . Ely City Darts Organisation, which started around 1932, has nearly 800 on its register, including 90 women. 63 02 16a

1963 03 19

Ely Chamber of Commerce commissioned an architect to produce a scheme for brightening up Fore Hill. Mr W.T. Rayment, a butcher, and Mr S.J. Theobald felt that it would encourage more visitors. Mr L.G. Cornwell would treat his shop on the lines recommended but Vernon Cross had already carried out some redecoration and would not be doing more and other traders could not see it working. It had to be done as a whole because the colours all blended. 63 03 19a.

1963 03 25

The former Quay Brewery site in Ely now houses a plastics factory owned by Devanon who have recently moved from London, bringing work to seven local people. The firm produces plastic articles for advertising display purposes, including plastic bananas! The site is large enough to accommodate 16 small light industrial units and the company is hoping to encourage other small manufacturers to switch from London to Ely. Ultimately the firm hopes to expand and increase its personnel to 30 women and five men 63 03 25a

1963 04 23

The Princess Royal, as Air Chief Commandant of the Princess Mary’s RAF Nursing Service, opened the new Outpatients Department at the Ely RAF Hospital. She inspected the Nurse Officers’ quarters, the Training School and the Airmen’s Dining Room before lunching in the Officers’ Mess and unveiling a plaque. Later she toured some of the wards and went to the Red Cross Library where the wives of five senior NCOs were presented. 63 04 23

1963 04 26

A London firm of steeplejacks are dismantling a 177 feet high chimney stack at Adelaide, near Ely, for the Ely Beet Sugar Factory. The work should take about a month. The operation must be done brick by brick as an explosion would damage nearby machinery. The chimney was erected in 1925 and was last used two years ago. 63 04 26a

1963 04 29

A million tons of fertile Fenland soil is to be given away. Standing 30 feet high and covering 100 acres it has been washed from sugar beet processed at the Ely Beet Factory over the past 30 years. They get about 30,000 tons of soil annually which is dumped nearby but has run out of space and it is cheaper to give it away than buy more land. It is used to make up gardens, bank up roads and fill in rubbish dumps. Anybody wanting soil has to arrange their own cartage 63 04 29a

1963 05 31

At Priors Court, formerly an army camp in West Fen Road Ely, 70 houses and flats are going up. Fairfax Court also being built – 63 05 31b

1963 06 05

Ely Barracks Field should be site for new public hall and civic centre – 63 06 05.

1963 06 06

Ely Quay Brewery site in Broad Street to house eleven factory units – 63 06 06

1963 07 05

Ely Cathedral Tabula has paintings of monks and Conqueror’s knights 63 07 05b

1963 07 06

Stables built at the time when it was a coaching inn have been converted into a temporary public bar at the White Hart Hotel, Ely, which is undergoing extensive modernisation. Appropriately the licensee, Mr Alec Spencer, calls the conversion the "Stable Bar", though customers have been quick to name it "Bonanza" or "The Ponderosa" after a well-known television series. The whitewashed walls of the 85 ft long stables, latterly used as garages, have been faced with trellis work. The furniture comes from the hotel's original bar lounge. Mr Spencer expects normal facilities in the hotel to be restored by September, then he hopes to get the rooms, which accommodates many summer tourists, listed in a British travel catalogue. 63 07 06

1963 08 10

Ely gardens judged by Charles Bester and H.C. Holliday – 63 08 10

1963 09 12

Ely St Audrey's primary school first day – photos – 63 09 12b, c

1963 10 11

Ely Beet Sugar Factory has started its 29th campaign. A bumper crop is expected at Ely sugar beet factory this season where staff are preparing to process more than half a million tons of beet. The 200 shift workers and 140 day workers expect to make over 62,000 tons of sugar during the next four months. By the time it ends, four months from now, nearly half-a-million tons of sugar beet will have been processed into raw sugar which is sent in bulk transporters to refining factories. It draws its supplies from more than 2,400 farms with 300 men working shifts around the clock. Unlike most of the other sugar factories Ely does not produce the finished product, but sends over 500 tons of raw sugar daily in bulk to other factories or refineries. Ninety per cent of the beet comes by road, the rest by rail. For a number of years some came by river but this was discontinued three years ago. Farmers, mainly in the cattle-rearing areas, take most of the 40,000 tons of molassed pulp produced in an average season. 63 10 11, a b, c

1963 12 05

Ely's new county library will be built a site in Minster Place once occupied by an SPCK Bookshop. The Royal Fine Art Commission has approved a design embodying the most up-to-date ideas. The ground floor will house adult and children's lending rooms and a quick reference section while upstairs will be a space for lectures and projection of films together with maps, plans, pictorial and museum specimens relating to Ely. It will also serve as an information bureau for summer tourists. Ely has had a county library since 1927 with the present, inadequate part-time branch in Bray's Lane existing in adapted premises for about 18 years. 63 12 05a

1963 12 05

The Royal Fine Art Commission has approved a design for Ely's new county library in Minster Place. The ground floor will house adult and children's lending rooms and a quick reference section while upstairs will be a space for lectures and projection of films together with maps, plans, pictorial and museum specimens relating to Ely. It will also serve as an information bureau for summer tourists. Ely has had a county library since 1927 with the present, inadequate part-time branch in Bray's Lane existing in adapted premises for about 18 years 63 12 05a

1963 12 11

Demolition work has begun on the 116 year-old Corn Exchange on Ely's Market Place. The property, which includes the Exchange Cinema, was purchased some time ago for £20,000 by a London development company which wants to build shops on the site. 63 12 11a

1963 12 20

Messrs A.T. Grain and Sons reported a record entry at their annual Fatstock Show at Ely. There were 44 cattle and 197 pigs on show. The judges – Messrs D.E. Leonard, Soham and A.S. Lemmon, Ely (cattle) and E. King, Ramsey (pigs) – said the standard was very high. The champion cup for the best fat steer or heifer went to a Hereford steer put in by Mr J. Wilson of Littleport, sold later at £12.2s.6d.

per live cwt. The best pig was a Large White bacon which won the championship cup for Mr G.J. Johnson of Wicken. Mr D.R. Sulman of Witcham took the reserve championship with his Large White porker

1964 01 07

Ely council is to consider forming a society of volunteers to run No.4 Lynn Road as a museum. The future of the public clock on the former Exchange Cinema is uncertain; nothing has been heard from the London Development Company about the suggestion that the mechanism should be incorporated into the new building to be erected on the Corn Exchange site. Now a similar inquiry will be made of the G.P.O. which is to build a new Post Office on a site facing the Market Place 64 01 07a

1964 01 15

Fore Hill Ely butcher's shop demolished to give better visibility at Broad Street junction – 64 01 15a

1964 01 30

Once a day at 1.15pm the little diesel train leaves Ely station, goes eight miles and arrives at Sutton. Then at 3.20 pm it turns round and goes back again. Hauling three goods wagons it stops first at Little Thetford – where the driver and fireman nip down smartly from the cab, open and close the gates, and continue the trip. The train takes less than an hour for the journey, carrying mainly fuel, with possible stops at Stretham, Wilburton and Haddenham.

1964 02 21

Two Ely schoolboys have made their own electric guitars with fittings including a tremolo which gives additional tonal effect. Christopher Brennand and Christopher Bunting started in the Needham's School wood-work room after passing their G.C.E. and finished at the evening institute. Now they will learn to play them and might form a group. The woodwork master, R.W. Harper has another half-dozen lads just beginning to make guitars which would cost £40 in the shops 64 02 21e

1964 02 26

Ely reservoir and booster pump being built for Ely, Mildenhall & Newmarket Water board – 64 02 26a

1964 02 28

A family will be living in the Bishop of Ely's House for the first time in more than 20 years. It clearly a bachelor's house at present. No woman today would accept a route between the kitchen and dining room with four steps down and two up. Things will have to change. Mrs E.K.J. Roberts, wife of the new Bishop, is keen on interior decoration with decided ideas on colour. 64 02 28b

1964 03 13

Ye Olde Tea Rooms and Museum in Fore Hill closed in 1964. The premises had been built in 1553 as a small house, but became a baker's shop at about the time Nelson lived. Frederick Thompson Cross acquired it in 1892 and 13 years later carried out extensive alterations to the shopfront overnight. For over half a century it housed a combined bakery, confectionery shop, restaurant and private museum with many articles displayed in cases, on the walls or hanging from the oak beams. The folk museum, acting as an adjunct to the restaurant attracted thousands of visitors. The auctioneer's gavel will seal the fate of pewter and brass, Staffordshire pottery and china, Elizabethan and 17th-century fireplaces, early agricultural hand tools and equipment, mediaeval cooking cranes and fire jacks, clay pipes and smokers' requisites, firearms, swords and bayonets, Roman pottery, rush holders, books and documents. Mr F. Vernon Cross will nostalgically recall hundreds of weary miles trudging up and down muddy fen droves, and hours of back-aching digging at Roswell Pits. Mr Cross views the end of the museum quite philosophically: "One has to be a realist. It can't go on for ever". After over 50 years as a master baker and confectioner – though between the ages of 13 and 16 he toured the country as a ventriloquist & tumbler – he intends to retire as soon as he can sell his business

1964 03 26

Improved heating ensures that visitors to Ely Cathedral are given a warmer welcome than ever before. In March 1964 the News snapped Mr William Pomfret tending the cathedral stoves. 64 03 26c

1964 03 28

Contents of Ely museum, collected by Vernon Cross in Ye Olde Tea Rooms and Museum to be auctioned. Building ransacked by Littleport Rioters in 1816. It was restored by his father in 1905 when the collection was started – photos – 64 03 28

1964 04 14

Ely view from cathedral tower – 64 04 14a

1964 04 16

A turf-digging tool and a fork used for harvesting were among the fenland tools bought for the Folk Museum at the sale of antiquities from Vernon Cross's 'Ye Olde Tea Rooms' at Ely. The curator, Miss Enid Porter, was among the crowd of buyers. She also obtained two Doulton spirit barrels and an 18th-century digester. Plaster moulds from old Ely houses, an unusual type of frying pan and a 19th-century knife cleaner were also purchased 64 04 16

1964 05 06

Ely Parsons Charity almshouses to be improved – 64 05 06

1964 05 11

Ely Bishop Edward Roberts enthroned – 64 05 11b

1964 05 12

A wartime Spitfire has made the 250-mile road journey from RAF Middleton St George Yorkshire on a 60-foot transporter to Ely where it was lifted with help from a 10-ton crane from RAF Waterbeach operated by Mr Stanley Porter of Bohemond Street. Now fitters are re-assembling it on the lawn at the entrance to the RAF Hospital where it will be on permanent display and floodlit at night 64 05 12

1964 08 25

Calibar prepacking factory fire, Angel Drove Ely – 64 08 25a

1964 09 01

Powchers Hall at The College, Ely, is an old stone building almost as ancient as the Cathedral under whose wall it nestles. It is occupied by the Assistant Bishop. The building badly needed constant, sustained heating. Electric thermal storage heaters, modern, clean and automatic, were installed in the study, bedroom and landing. No other work has to be done. They are charged during the night and electricity does the rest 64 09 01b

1964 09 04

A journey on the fated Ely-Newmarket railway line shows why it has become the victim of Beeching's axe. The only regular traveller is a British Railway employee who uses it to get home to Fordham. Two people got on at Ely – both BR staff – and the only other passengers were an American couple touring Britain. There was nobody waiting at Soham or Fordham. Sometimes up to 30 people get on the Ely-bound station at Soham before changing trains to Cambridge but mostly only a few people use it. 64 09 04

1964 09 16

Farmers needed to invest in new equipment to harvest sugar beet. A demonstration of the new Standen Ltd sugar beet harvester alongside a normal tractor-pulled harvester interested visitors who watched it in action near Ely

1964 09 18

Ely Broad Street car park site photo – 64 09 18

1964 09 21

Ely Chamber of Commerce exhibition, Paradise – 64 09 21

1964 10 22

Ely needs a community centre. The Corn Exchange has been bought by a London development company and demolished; the Central Hall has been turned into offices for the Ministry of Labour and the Drill Hall is seldom used for socials. A hall could be incorporated in the proposed new Needham's School but this might not be available for letting. The council-owned Barracks Field car park in Silver Street would provide the answer as it has space for a hall and parking. 64 10 22c

1964 11 03

Ely council to buy Paradise recreation ground from Church Commissioners – 64 11 03

1964 11 16

Doris Nix of Ely wants to be a Presbyterian minister at Westminster College – 64 11 16

1964 11 18

Ely new drainage works start, Butter Market – 64 11 18c

1964 11 19

St Martin's Jam Factory Ely to be taken by Dorman Sprayer Co – 64 11 19a

1964 11 27

Ely Bishop's gaol closed in 1836 and leased as a police station. When they moved out in the 1890s a private family lived there, using better-appointed cells as bedrooms. In 1961 was sold to Ely UDC and used by Health Department and School's Museums Service. May become a museum – 64 11 27g

1964 12 11

The Cutter inn reopened in December 1964 after modernisation. One of the new features is a public bar decorated as the interior of a ship's cabin and including a bar counter in the shape of a boat. The official opening was conducted by Stewart Morris, a former Olympic sailing gold medallist, who had known the Cutter since the 1930s when he practised on the Ouse as a member of the Cambridge University Sailing Club. He received the first pint of beer and downed it in one go.

1965 01 05

Dorman Sprayer of Cambridge begin production at new works – St Martin's Jam factory Ely – 65 01 05

1965 02 24

Ely industrial growth but difficult encourage firms – 65 02 24b

1965 02 27

Print of Ely Martyrs engraved wrong way round – 65 02 27b

1965 03 15

After opening Ely Urban Council's new £14,745 car park at the rear of Fore Hill, the chairman, Mrs B.O. Jefferson Smith, was driven round it in a 1925 Bullnose Morris Cowley. With her were the two other women councillors, Mrs E.M. Vinith-Williams, chairman of the Works Committee, and Mrs E.B. Cross. The car, owned by T.H. Nice and & Co. Ltd., was driven from their Ely show rooms by Mr J.P. Stow, a director of the firm and manager at Ely. Mrs Jefferson Smith appealed to local motorists not to park in the streets all day but to use the new facilities and leave the short-stay car parks for visitors and shoppers from surrounding districts. The car park provides 107 spaces. The entrance is in Broad Street but a footpath connects with the top of Fore Hill and the city centre.

1965 05 07

Upherds Lane, Ely, an unadopted, bumpy, earth-surfaced thoroughfare is subject controversy – 65 05 07a

1965 05 24

A once-in-a-lifetime event was how the area secretary, Mr E.B. Macgregor of Cambridge summed up the Eastern area British Legion Rally and parade at Ely. The city, scene of many parades in the past, had never seen anything like it. Long before the rally was timed to start 160 coaches and cars in their hundreds converged on the city. Out of them spilled nearly 7,000 legionnaires almost doubling the population from counties in the eastern area. About 3,750 of them went to assembly points from which, joined by 15 bands, they marched to the cathedral. Inside every available inch was used for seating by the congregation. As they sang the opening hymn the Queen's old standard, being paraded for the last time, was handed to the Dean of Ely, the very Rev C.P. Hankey, for laying-up in the cathedral. The new standard was unfurled and dedicated by the Bishop of Ely. Outside hundreds who had listened to loudspeakers relaying the service saw the new standard head the long parade covering three decades of British military history and three generations of ex-servicemen. Mr Macgregor said: "I shall be surprised if ever there is another parade like this in the area." - 65 05 24c

1965 06 08

Isle Prison stone found in Broad St, Ely – 65 06 08

1965 06 28

Ely Cathedral altar cross by Graham Sutherland was rejected by Dean, now goes to France – 65 06 28

1965 07

Work is to start immediately on a block of lease-hold shops & offices on the former Corn Exchange site. The project will be carried out by Suburban Counties Properties Ltd of London who bought the site nearly 3 years ago for £20,000 and later demolished the Corn Exchange and adjoining cinema. The building work will be by J.H. Cross & Sons Ltd of Littleport; the architects are Fewster & Partners of London. The development is the third on what will become a 'new look' Market Place. Work on a new post office opposite the site started earlier this year while a supermarket at the junction with Brays Lane is nearing completion

1965 07 23

Stewart and Patterson brewery dray with Percheron horses visit Ely – 65 07 23a

1965 07 31

The new Post Office in Market Place, Ely will replace the existing Victorian building 100 yards away in Market Street. Work began earlier this year and the building is expected to be ready for occupation in the Autumn next year. The work will cost about £64,000. The site in Market Place, which has been vacant for some time, was once occupied by a Temperance Hotel. 65 07 31a

1965 08 14

Ely pathway along river beside Cutter to connect with path at Waterside – 65 08 14a

1965 09 13

Last passenger train from Ely to Newmarket – feature & photo – 65 09 13a, b

1965 10 20

Ely Tesco supermarket tones in – 65 10 20b

1965 10 29

For Dr Bertha Tilly yesterday's Ely High School speech day was her last. She retires next year after 30 years as headmistress. In a tribute to Miss Tilly, the chairman of the governors, Mr J.M. Sneesby, said: "It is a very fine record. By her force of character, devotion and hard work she has built up a

school of which we are all proud. In her speech Miss Tilly made a plea for the preservation of grammar school standards in any educational reorganisation plan. She said "Plans are already afoot which may, if put into action, cause this school to lose its identity".

1965 11 29

Colourful and well-designed window displays, a repeat of the popular and much-admired decorative street lighting, with a star in the centre of each span, and as an innovation the introduction of a dozen eight-foot high 'Mod' angels erected at strategic points. These are amongst the attractions, which allied to top class salesmanship, excellent service and ingenuity, are certain to make yet another Ely and district chamber of trade 'shopping week' a success. It will spotlight the ability of trading establishments to supply, in wide variety and quality, all the shopping public's needs. The street illuminations have in past years bought praise from a wide area and set a pattern followed by other towns. The 'Mod' angels complete with golden crowns and candlesticks are illuminated at the head and feet and placed in positions where it would be difficult to extend the decorative lights. The chamber's president W.A.T. Rayment said "I believe there are definite advantages to shopping in Ely, and for the customers coming in from the villages by car. Parking facilities are reasonable and we now have an additional car park adjacent to the shopping area at the rear of Fore Hill.

– 65 11 29a

1966 01 17

When the Rt Rev Robert Arnold Schurhoff Martineau became Suffragan Bishop of Huntingdon he was the first man to hold an office originally created nearly 430 years ago. His commissioning in Ely Cathedral was watched by more than 300 people. They heard the Bishop of Ely, the Rt Rev E.J.K. Roberts say: "There has been a Suffragan Bishop of Huntingdon since 1538. The Church of England sets about its business with caution and it has taken nearly 430 years to be sure of the right man". For the commissioning cathedral clergy and the Bishop of Ely, preceded by the choir of St John's church, Cambridge, walked in procession to the Octagon. There, in front of the nave altar the coped and mitred Bishop Martineau, escorted by the archdeacons, stood as the seated Bishop of Ely read the document of commission and handed him his crosier. Then, following cathedral statutes the Suffragan Bishop was conducted to the choir gates where, after the administration of the canonical oath, he was installed by the Dean of Ely, the Very Rev C.P. Hankey. After the service the new Bishop of Huntingdon blessed the congregation

1966 03 14

Ely Market Square demolition – photo – 66 03 14a

1966 04 04

Army lorry petrol tank catches fire on A10 near Ely – 66 04 04c

1966 04 18

Bishop's House at Ely modernised – feature – 66 04 18d

1966 05 16

Ely choristers photo in new cassocks – 66 05 16

1966 08 23

Ely Market Place redevelopment work – photo – 66 08 23b

1967 05 22

Ely Cathedral attempt to blow up safe failed – 67 05 22

1968 04 30

At one minute past midnight Ely RAF Hospital became a station of Strike Command, the RAF's new principal front-line organisation. To mark the birth of the new structure there was a colour-hoisting parade at the hospital today. Strike command has been created by the merger of Fighter Commands to

which the hospital belonged and Bomber Command, both of which were formed in July 1936. The salute was taken by the Commanding Officer, group Captain T.N.N. Brennan

1968 05 14

The Cathedral choir plays an essential part in the services; in 1968 they adopted new robes: Choristers of Ely Cathedral are now wearing new-style robes. On the left John Minett shows the new style which is similar to a monk's habit, contrasting with the old style worn by Malcolm Sugar

1968 08 09

Sculpture, tea, walled garden, wines ... the attractions of the Old Fire Engine House at Ely are mixed on the menu in a charmingly casual way. "But then everything is done on rather a casual basis", said the manageress, Miss Ann Ford, "and all the staff here turn their hands to various jobs". Opened in June to serve cold lunches, morning coffee and afternoon tea, the restaurant is run largely by amateurs, except for the cook, Mrs Judi Fulford, who has a Cordon Bleu Certificate. The manageress makes salads, the secretary. Mrs Debbie Prince-White, takes a turn at waitressing when the demand for afternoon teas reaches a peak, and the waitress, a student, Suzanne Dhenin, gives a hand with the dishes, while the washer-up, a 16-year-old schoolboy, Bob Baxter, who has a flair for baking, mixes up sponges in the lulls between the dish-washing. And on the first Sunday the café opened – to an unexpected 130 afternoon teas – weekend guests of the staff were pressed into service too

1966 09 15

A new labour-saving plan installed this year at Ely Sugar Beet Factory includes an automatic centrifugal for spinning sugar from the syrup, to replace two old ones and a large vacuum pan for boiling the syrup, which will supplant two smaller and less efficient ones. The new pan will give greater capacity than the other two together.

1966 10 17

The head postmaster, Mr A. Nix, his deputy, Mr A.J. East and about 50 members of staff will work for the first time in up-to-date offices designed to improve greater efficiency and pleasant working conditions. The new Post Office will accommodate six counter clerks, though should future developments require a larger public office, an allowance had been made for extending the rear. The office has been designed to give good natural light and acoustics. The ground floor has an aluminium 'house-style unit' treatment, which is to be standard for post offices throughout the country though as Ely is one of the first in the country to have this treatment the unit has been specially made. Among facilities included in the building are a writing room, accounts branch office, head and assistant postmasters' rooms, a loading bay for parcels and a kitchen where staff can cook their own meals

1968 11 06

A suggestion by the Surveyor, that the west side of Market Place should be closed to traffic on Thursday market days has been greeted by a storm of protest from traders. Mr Stroud said it would be of advantage to the public if the road were closed to traffic on Thursdays between 9am and 6 pm. "This would enable pedestrians to walk from the market to the central core of the town without crossing the traffic stream. Market stalls could be resited in the roadway, leaving the widest paved area opposite the Post Office free for seats, pictorial maps etc". Traders who were to be affected described it as ridiculous, pointless and impossible. Mr Francis Kempton, fruiterer said: "We have people making regular deliveries every day. If they can't park outside in the road they won't park anywhere. There are enough restrictions in this town anyway and the council are just chasing trade away". Bowgen's, the bakers, would certainly come to a standstill because they relied on seven van deliveries a day from the bakery, said the manageress, Mrs Jo Brown. Next door Mr Percy Newstead, the fishmonger, said a closure was likely to cause a loss of trade because people would not be able to park outside the shop. The manager of Green and White, the off-licence, Mr E.G. Chapman said: "This is impossible. I have two drays and about 10 other deliveries on Thursdays. I shall fight this and I shall have some of the big companies behind me. Shops in the partly-empty Market Place block, whose communal service area has its only access from the road on the west side of the Market Place would also be affected. A spokesman for Radio Relay, the television rental firm said access to the

front of their shop was already closed to traffic on Thursdays because of the market. Now it looked as if the service area might be cut off as well. "If the road is closed the vans will become immobile if they are left in the yard. The whole idea of the run-in at the back is to get the vans off the road. And if we leave the vans outside then we will have to carry the television sets all over town to get to them", he said. 68 11 06a

1969 03 03

Ely Cathedral attracts thousands of visitors, some of whom now arrive by foot along the long distance Fen Rivers Way footpath, but in March 1969 it was the start of a 20-mile walk by members of the Ely Round Table to raise money for a mini-bus. All but one of the 21 walkers completed the course from Ely to Stretham, Wicken, Soham & Stuntney. The Ely Palace School provided a nurse to bandage sore feet on the way round.

1969 11 21

Stewart and Patterson says closure of Ely brewery due need for economies of scale from brewing at Norwich and Northampton – 69 11 21

1969 05 17

Ely Woolpack inn closes – 69 05 17

1969 05 22

Ely Library receives Civic Trust award – 69 05 22

1969 08 22

Offices on the top floor of Ely's Post Office are to be converted into a flat. The Assistant Head Postmaster at Cambridge, Mr P.G. Croucher said: 'Now all the administrative work is done at Cambridge there are several offices at Ely, which are no longer of any use. We feel that by converting them into a flat we could bring in some revenue

1970 08 25

The Maltings had been constructed to provide malt for the Ely brewery. It was badly damaged by fire & sold for £100 to the urban council on condition it be turned into a public hall. The proposal proved controversial with many favouring a centrally situated hall adjoining Paradise recreation ground, but the council decided to apply for permission to borrow £78,049 to meet the cost of the work and ask the County Council for a grant towards providing a public hall. The conversion work was undertaken by architect Mr Dennis Adams. The hardest job was the supporting of the roof and walls while two of the interior walls were removed. This produced a high oak-beamed hall lined with bare, sand-blasted, brick. The Maltings public hall was opened by the Secretary of State for the Environment Mr Peter Walker in October 1971. The scheme had cost £87,000. At the opening a member of the council of the Danish capital city of Ribe - Ely's sister city - presented a cheque for £25 to be spent on decorating the building.

1970 10 01

The first of the fleet of lorries that in the next four months will make thousands of journeys rolled into the Ely Beet Sugar Factory at the start of another sugar processing campaign. By next January when the non-stop campaign ends the factory expects to have dealt with around 456,000 tons of sugar beet.

1971 05 28

Princess Alexandra paid an official visit to Ely RAF Hospital in May 1971 when she toured four of the wards – maternity, children's, men's surgical and women's medical. She was also introduced to 61-year-old Miss Doris Lambert who has been a domestic cleaner and bat-woman at the hospital for 30 years

1971 07 20

"Operation Switchover", the transfer of equipment, mostly books, from the Ely St Mary's Church of England Junior School in St Mary's Street to the new £90,000 buildings at High Barns, was completed yesterday. And 50 boys in the top form had time off lessons to help load the books into the removal van that provided a shuttle service between the two schools. All the pupils have taken part in

“Operation Switchover”. The headmaster, Mr Walter Bebbington, said: “The idea was to let them become involved in the move”. The school have used St Mary’s Street for three years. They moved in when the Needham’s School transferred to their new buildings in Downham Road. Before that they were in separate buildings in Silver Street and Broad Street

1972 01 14

Old Fire Engine House, Ely – illustrated feature – 72 01 14

1972 03 26

The site of the old Woolpack Inn, the 200-year-old pub at the corner of Market Street and Newnham Streets Ely, has been bought by a Northern development company. Work is to start soon on building a shop and offices. The pub was closed nearly 3 years ago. It was knocked down last year

1972 08 02

Choirs from around the world sing at Ely Cathedral from time to time. Canon George Youell, the cathedral treasurer, shows an American choir of St Michael & All Angels, Georgia, around the cathedral where they are singing at services this week. It is the second time the choir has sung at the cathedral. Their own church seats 200 people.

1972 12 14

Ely may find itself heading downhill during the next 10 years unless central and local government come to the rescue, warns a report out today. Ely and the surrounding Fenland villages are among 16 "problem" rural areas listed in the Small Towns Study commissioned by the East Anglia Economic Planning Council. The report says the district is suffering; as agriculture becomes more mechanised there is a steady drift from the land but the influx of industry is insufficient to compensate. The result is a general rundown of the market towns and surrounding villages with fewer jobs, fewer services and fewer inducements to stay. The report urges inducements to industry to establish more factories in rural East Anglia

1973 01 12

In the medical field a health centre is a social parallel to a village college. A health centre provides a very wide range of services and facilities to its "customers" all in one place. While Cambridgeshire was not among the real pioneers it has certainly joined the vanguard quickly. For it is now believed that there are more general practitioners based in Cambridgeshire Health centres, as a percentage, than anywhere else in the country. And this has all happened since the first health centre in the county was opened at March in 1969. Sawston Littleport and Whittlesey followed that year. Ely and Soham got similar centres in 1971, two more at Bar Hill and Fulbourn are now being built for opening next spring

1973 03 07

With pomp and pageantry - and a large clap of thunder and deluge of snow and rain - Ely cathedral's 13th centenary celebrations were launched. There was something almost supernatural about the thunder and lightning and the deluge which came as the heavens opened up. It was almost as if the monks, who 1,300 years ago established the first monastic settlement in the historic city, were watching and where determined to make their presence felt. But the celebrations got off beneath the shadow of the cathedral which dominates Ely, as hundreds of townspeople, visitors from the surrounding area and tourists watched. It marked the beginning of a year of activities

1973 05 14

Over 5,000 people - umbrella-ed, rain-coated and overcoated against a cold drizzling afternoon - packed into Ely's park for the BBC "It's a Knock-Out" between Ely and Hertford. It turned out not so much of a knockout as a slaughter as Ely won by a record 19-1. Now Ely have won themselves a trip to Arnhem in Holland for an international "Jeux-sans-frontiers" heat in August. Genial Eddie Waring

- sharing commentating duties with Stuart Hall said "It is a remarkable performance and I think the biggest margin we have ever had". Team manager, David Cornwell said, "I don't believe it"

1973 05 15

The centre of Ely became one big pedestrian precinct as streets were sealed off to traffic for a ten-day festival - the 1,300 year-old city's most spectacular event of this, or possibly any other, century. Six thousand costumed children from 670 schools in the Diocese poured in by train, coach and on foot to make merry in a festival organised as part of the cathedral's 13th-century celebrations. It aimed at recreating the atmosphere of the ancient St Etheldreda's fair. Monks, peddlers and mummers roamed the streets, slaves were auctioned, bears were baited, beef was roasted on spits in the Market Place, local shopkeepers and their staffs in costume joined in the fun making

1973 05 21

Sir Harry Legge-Bourke MP has died at his London home. He came to live in Ely in 1946, the year after he won the Isle of Ely parliamentary seat from the Liberals. He farmed at Witchford for the next 12 years and named his Ely home Witchford House. Sir Harry played an active role in county affairs and was a popular and hard-working Member of Parliament. He fought eight campaigns to retain his Isle of Ely seat for 28 years. Sir Harry was often dubbed "the galloping major" for the zest with which he tackled his electioneering campaign

1973 06 21

A 7 1/2 cwt bullock, slaughtered on Monday, was hoisted on to a pit alongside a wood fire in the Park at Ely. For the next three days it will be slow-roasted ready for a barbecue that will form part of an Ely festival year entertainment on Saturday night. The operation is being supervised by Ely butcher, Mr Toni Rayment. It is the first whole ox is to be roasted in Ely for 38 years. The last time was in May 1935 when his father roasted one for King George's jubilee celebrations. It will be cut into 5,000 helpings.

1973 06 25

The Bishop of Ely, the Rt. Rev. Edward Roberts, and the Bishop of Huntingdon, the Rt. Rev Eric Walls, completed their 300 miles "beat the bounds" tour of their widespread diocese on Saturday. And their return together to Ely brought shopping to a standstill. Shopkeepers and their staffs, summer dressed and shirt-sleeved customers, lined the streets to watch the Bishops, accompanied by Ely's civic leaders, join in a procession of over 300 diocesan churchwardens to the cathedral for a service addressed by the Archbishop of Canterbury to mark the 1,300th festival service - on St Etheldreda's day

1973 07 19

Ely last night won the fourth European heat of the television "It's a Knockout" competition. The ancient cathedral city of Arnhem erupted with English roars and cheers as they scraped home by just three points. The team and their 100 supporters ran riot over the market place. The chairman of the urban council, Coun. Stanley Cornwell, kissed every woman in sight. Later there were all-night parties for the Ely invasion force. The team are now almost certain to go to the final in Paris

1973 09 13

Eighteen Ely people won international fame for their home town when they battled their way through a crazy obstacle course in a game which is being watched by 150 million television viewers. Ely became the Knock Out kings of Europe by a mere two points. With defeat staring them in the face they staged a storming finish to wrest the crown from six other countries in Paris. Many Fenlanders were openly weeping or walking around the arena in a daze as they realised they had achieved a dream which started more than a year ago

1973 09 17

Ely's victorious "It's a Knockout" team who followed up their British win and international success at Arnhem by winning the European championship were given the biggest civic reception ever seen in

the city. Thousands of cheering people lined the streets for what team manager, David Cornwell, described as a "fantastic response". Afterwards there was a champagne celebration at the Maltings

1973 10 23

Ely RAF Hospital may be developed as one of the three main Service hospitals in the country. The report of an inquiry into Defence Medical Services says each service should have one major hospital of up to 400 beds. In the case of the RAF it suggests that either to Ely hospital or the one at Halton, Bucks., would be suitable for this kind of development. Ely RAF Hospital was opened in 1940 and since then has been considerably extended. For a number of years it has also admitted civilian patients and it is reckoned that about 30 per cent of people treated there are civilians. Last year it treated 6,000 in-patients and just over 31,000 out-patients

1973 11 24

The Queen came to Ely yesterday – and made history because she gave her permission to allow Ely the right to remain a city after the local government reorganisation next April. She dressed for the weather in a fitted coat of white wool trimmed with brown fur and a brown hat with white fur. She looked charming, cosy and every inch a Queen as she paused to meet pupils of the Palace School. The most hectic moment of a busy day came in the afternoon on the market place where crowds had gathered to see her watch 600 schoolchildren put on a display of the Ely street festival seen earlier this year. A black mongrel dog kept following the Royal party. A police officer gently pushed the dog into the crowd and gave instructions to people to stand with their legs close together to prevent the dog running out again

1974 09 13

Ely hairdresser Mr Fred Dobson is still shaving customers and tending hair at the age of 85. The family business started in 1739 and now, five generations later, is entering its last chapter. In his museum-cum-salon in St Mary's street hangs a 1730s print showing his great great great grandfather shaving a jolly side-boarded customer. Mr Dobson began his barber's artistry as a lad of 7, lathering the customers. He is famous for the bald patches recipe cure perfected through the five generations of the business. He was also well known for his wigs.

1974 10 24

Mid-Anglia's cigarette smokers can gasp with relief; tobacconists have stocks of most brands, and W.D. and H.O. Wills's workers have ended their strike. The manager of wholesalers Palmer & Harvey Ltd of Cambridge says regular customers have been getting about ¾ of the amount of Embassy and Regal cigarettes they had ordered. At Ely, tobacco wholesale Mr Patrick Fynes said he was severely rationing his customers. Asked if he thought this would force heavy smokers to cut down, he replied: "They will smoke anything". Finlay tobacconists in Ely High Street said they were not too badly off.

1975

In 1975 a new museum opened – more than 20 years after it was first considered.

The museum, housed in the former choir school at The Sacrist's Gate, High Street, contains relics from the city and the surrounding area. Although mooted in the immediate post-war years it is only since the formation of the Ely Museum Society that definite steps have been taken to get the project off the ground. The former Ely Urban Council considered setting up a museum in the old gaol house in Lynn Road but the idea was shelved. About five years ago the museum idea was revived. Local architect, Mr Dennis Adams, held a public meeting and was inundated with support. From that meeting the Ely Museum Society was formed of which Mr Adams is now chairman. Most of the exhibits have been given or loaned by local people

1975 03 19

Mr Edwin Appleyard's partnership with a Shell oil barge has ended after 18 years. The 60-year old barge was first introduced to the fens from Holland about 1910 and was used for delivering tulip and daffodil bulbs growing in the fens to Ely station. It next became a cargo boat plying between King's

Lynn and Cambridge before being bought by Shell in the 1920s. It was then used to supply pumping stations with gas oil. Now it has been sold to a canal and passenger boat operator of Manchester.

1975 10 14

The final chapter in the history of the long-established Ely boat-building firm, Appleyard Lincoln, was played out when more than 1,700 items were put up for auction. They went into liquidation earlier this year after being hard hit by VAT and lack of orders. Among the lots on sale were three motor cruisers still under construction

1975 11 07

There are three restaurants in Cambridgeshire that are worth a star – according to Mr Egon Ronay in his latest guide, just published. The Old Fire Engine House at Ely, the Pheasant Inn at Keyston and Swavesey's Hotel de la Poste are amongst the best eating places in England. At Swavesey patrons are assured of an "extensive, interesting and impeccably French menu and swift bustling service". The Pheasant produces intriguing sea-food dishes & at the Old Fire Engine local women who have had no real professional training cook to a consistently high standard

1976 06 09

The Tower Hospital played an important part in the life of the community. In June 1976 a new day hospital, catering for 15 elderly people, was dedicated by the Bishop of Huntingdon, the Rt Rev Eric Wall in June 1976, seen talking to Mrs Hagare King and Mr George Nottage. The centre provided physiotherapy to help patients regain the use of their limbs, speech therapy and occupational therapy. The Friends of Tower Hospital contributed towards its facilities.

1976 07 01

Gentlemen visiting the Old Fire Engine House Restaurant at Ely may find it a little difficult to keep their minds on the menu. For the waitresses include three beauty queens, Debbie Rumbelow, who is Miss Ely; Julie Roberts, otherwise known as Miss Welney; and Linda Jakes who recently became Miss Coveney. "We don't choose our waitresses just for their looks; we chose them for their aptitude for the work. Appearances are secondary" explained their employer Mrs Ann Wheatley.

1976 12 24

A question-mark hangs over the hub of local farming at Owen Webb House, as the county branch of the National Farmers' union embarks on a long round of negotiations which could lead to Ely becoming the capital of county agriculture. Negotiations for the proposed site in Silver Street, Ely, reputed to be worth about £50,000 are still in their infancy. The Owen Webb site in Cambridge has enormous development potential but the secretary is certain that the centre, opened in 1953, will remain the focal point for county farming

1977 03 09

The RAF Hospital at Ely, whose future was in doubt because of defence cuts, will stay open, thanks to a decision by the Cambridgeshire Area Health Authority to help with its costs until there is a substantial expansion of National Health Service facilities. Closure of the hospital, which carries 65 much-needed NHS beds, would have a serious effect on hospital provision. They also pledged to keep the maternity service in Ely going should the Defence Department give them notice to quit the Grange Maternity unit

1977 08 04

Ely is fast becoming a thriving shopping centre. Every Thursday it has sprung to life for market day with farmers and other people from miles around congregating in the Market Square and taking advantage of the fact that some of the city pubs are open all day. Now Ely tends to be busy throughout the week

1977 11 07

A congregation of 2,500 people came to Ely Cathedral to see the Rt Rev Peter Walker inducted, installed and enthroned as Bishop causing a traffic jam as Ely's medieval streets took the strain of the influx of people coming to the biggest service since Bishop Robert's induction 13 years ago. The cathedral was packed as a procession of 10 bishops entered the building before the west end doors were firmly shut. The new bishop raised his crook to shoulder height and struck the vast doors three times. The echoes died down, the doors opened and with a fanfare the service commenced.

1977 11 25

An Ely youth club has been forced to close because it is too successful. The Young Pioneers Club is now so big it has outgrown its usual meeting place, the homes of the leaders. As a last resort to get a suitable club room members have sent a petition to Ely City Council calling for help. The club was started about two years ago to cater for children too young to go to the other youth clubs. They started with 12 members, now they have 40.

1978 02 15

Ely must be the most historic city in the fens and has some of the leading firms. The premises occupied by the Fenland Carpet Company have a varied history. Over 50 years ago it was possible to have a carriage built by a firm trading as 'Fennings' Later it became well-known for supplying cycles and motor cycles in a business run by Mr Garnett & Mr Horace Wallis, under the trading title of Walbro and more recently they were occupied by Millers the music people and part was used as a 'discotheque'. Fenland Carpets was first formed about 15 years ago and give personal attention to their customer's requirements.

1978 09 06

The first new boat sailed into the new marina beside the River Ouse at Ely. Work on Banham Marina, which can hold 112 pleasure craft, started in May and for the past few days it has been gradually filled with water. It is now ready for use, although landscaping, paths and car parks still have to be completed. It was designed by Dennis Adams and Partners of Ely and finished just in time for boat owners to 'lay off' their craft for the winter months.

1978 09 26

David Patrick, paddled down the River Cam in a boat which is thought to be the last of its kind afloat on the river. He bought the Princess Jane when she was used as just a floating platform for an overhaul of Ely High Bridge. It was pock-marked by rust, her steam engines were removed and she was without a wheelhouse. Now he has restored the paddle tug to its former glory. But sadly when the new steam engines are fitted the boat will need deep moorings, of which there are few along the river.

1978 10 17

The jobs of Cambridge firemen are safe in spite of a major shake-up suggested in an official county council report aimed at improving the cost effectiveness of the Fire and Rescue Service. It hints that Parkside fire station is over-manned, particularly at night. A reduction in the number of full-time crews should be considered with a new fire station in the north of the city. Huntingdon fire station should be reduced to day manning on a seven-day basis and changes are also suggested at Ely. Proposals could involve the deployment of existing staff and they may need extra firemen when the new 42-hour week starts next month

1979 01 08

Cabinet Ministers have met to discuss how to handle the twin crises of the strikes by lorry and petrol tanker drivers which threaten to paralyse road traffic, halt industrial production and strip supermarket shelves of food. The fuel shortage is not yet affecting Eastern Counties bus services and British Sugar Corporation is continuing its sugar beet campaign at Ely which is not oil-fired. Farmers have expressed fears about feeding livestock after Cambridge lorry drivers voted to join the unofficial strike. The Transport and General Workers Union has been supporting the strike by provincial newspaper journalists by refusing to cross their picket lines with supplies of newsprint.

1979 01 09

Crucial talks are being held to try to unravel Britain's transport crisis. The immediate threat to fuel supplies has eased but there will be no evening bus services in Cambridge and Ely; Eastern Counties say this is the best way to conserve stocks so that most bus services could operate for as long as possible. Some supplies are still getting through to Ely sugar beet factor where farmers are taking their own crops in with tractors and trailers as road haulage drivers are not crossing picket lines.

1979 02 12

Sometime during the night of July 17th last year a one-inch fuel pipe running under Mildenhall air base fractured. It was only a small leak but it is only now that the disturbing consequences have become apparent. The fuel threatened a water bore hole that served the whole of Ely and Littleport and an emergency water pipe had to be laid. Although the pipeline is on an American air base, the British taxpayers will pay the bill which is likely to be in the region of half a million pounds

1979 03 29

Cambridge comes out poorly in the new 'Good Food Guide'; two entries are dropped leaving the city with just one restaurant, the 'unusually suave' Peking Chinese Restaurant in Burleigh Street, and one pub, the Fort St George. Out go the Strudel's Restaurant in Fitzroy Street and the Golden Palace Chinese restaurant in Ely together with the Eagle in Bene't Street and the Plough at Coton. Old favourites which retain their rating include the Old Fire Engine House at Ely, the Old Bridge Hotel Huntingdon and the Hotel de la Poste, Swavesey. The Pink Geranium at Melbourn gets the humbler 'Pass' rating.

1979 07 12

At Ely cattle market the fat pigs are sold at 10 am, then live poultry followed by dressed poultry and produce, furniture and dead stock and more furniture. Sale by auction is a curious business, a jolly bantering and time-consuming affair. The crowd are mainly old hands, but that doesn't guarantee rock-bottom prices. Quite often they went above prices in the nearby general market. On occasions this was loudly pointed out by a member of the audience who nevertheless appeared to be tolerated as an unavoidable part of the proceedings and often started the bidding, albeit well below the auctioneer's asking price. Bidding is usually done on the basis of the price per single cabbage or pound of strawberries and there is no obligation to take the lot. Most people take two or three items and bidding starts again for the rest.

1979 08 03

BBC Television uncovered a wealth of local treasures when its 'Antiques Roadshow' visited Ely. Arthur Negus and experts from leading auction houses were there to give valuations, together with Angela Rippon who presented the program. Amongst the items brought in for assessment were items of local interest including a 12-foot punt gun made in 1840, which was probably used in the fens. Strapped to a boat and loaded with 30lb of short it was capable of killing up to 200 birds at one go. There was a Ming vase, a rich vein of Oriental porcelain, a number of carvings from Africa and Indonesia as well as pieces of local interest.

1979 08 09

Tesco's plans for a superstore at Broad Street Ely have been agreed by planners, despite fears from the Council that the scheme will hit existing shops and complaints from Waterside residents about extra traffic. But the Ely Society and the Chamber of Commerce supported the idea. Development Manager Timothy Aldworth said he had never felt the area was an ideal centre for industry; parking pressures on Market Square would be eased and the Club Hotel properly renovated. Ely's shopping centre was in danger of losing out to Cambridge and Newmarket unless new life was injected into it.

1979 09 28

The Cambridgeshire Area Health Authority has reaffirmed its decision to close the Grange Maternity Unit at Ely, despite protests. The closure of the ten-bed general practitioner unit has been under consideration for years but delays and disagreements have left its future in limbo. But there was little

comment when the authority overwhelmingly decided to go ahead with the closure. It could be the first of many unpalatable decisions they have to take over the next two years.

1979

The Ely beet sugar factory might be closed if there is a big cut in the British sugar acreage. The British Sugar Corporation has always denied rumours that it may be axed but now the whole future of the beet industry is in doubt because of Common Market proposals. Eight of the smaller factories might have to be closed with redundancies amounting to 2,500 people (about 300 work at Ely). There had been no really good crop since Britain joined the community and problems of sugar supplies from the Commonwealth

1979 12 05

Crucial meetings are to be held over plans for saving the Cambridgeshire sugar beet industry. Farmers are being asked to make ten percent cuts when they were already producing less than the present quota. The county has 63,000 acres of beet which is treated at factories like Ely before going on to processing outlets. It is a crop which confronts farmers with many uncertainties over prices for a highly mechanised crop which is expensive to harvest and vulnerable to weather and disease. But the biggest headache is the political wrangle now the Eurocrats of Brussels are casting their shadow over its future.

1979 12 05

The Ely-Littleport by-pass could be lost if there was too big a fight for last-minute changes, a councillor warned. The Ministry of Transport has omitted a link road between the by-pass and the A10 at Chettisham and because of this traffic bound for the north of Ely will have to enter along Downham Road and the narrow Egremont Street to get to most of the factory areas. But while a link road is desirable it is not essential and is economic. The council wants a lorry park at Chettisham which could form part of any future link road.

1979 12 12

The centre of Ely is of course dominated by the cathedral. But nestling around it in profusion are a variety of shops providing for virtually every need. Like every other town it has its traffic and parking problems. But they appear to be less severe in Ely. This of course enhances the area's attractiveness as a shopping centre.

1980 01 16

A major expansion scheme expected to cost nearly £4 million is planned for Ely RAF Hospital. Four operating theatres, two new wards and a number of other facilities are to be added. The expansion – brought about by the decision to close the RAF Hospital at Nocton Hall, Lincolnshire – will mean a significant increase in the number of civilian and service jobs. From 1983 Ely will be the RAF's only hospital in the Eastern Counties and the new facilities will be needed to cope with the extra number of in-patients. The present hospital has 142 beds in seven wards and two new wards are to be added as part of the expansion scheme. Four new operating theatres will be built to replace the two existing ones which will be converted for other uses. A new physiotherapy unit, gymnasium and remedial therapy centre will be added and the size of the dental clinic will be increased. A number of old buildings are to be demolished and their facilities re-located in the main buildings. The hospital already takes National Health Service patients in the area but the spokesman was unable to say whether their numbers would be increased after 1983

1980 01 25

Ely station has again been chosen as the Motorail terminal for the whole of East Anglia. It will offer a Thursday and Saturday overnight service to Stirling. The service was switched from Cambridge and has been so successful there is now a doubt whether it will ever return. This season's fares will mean a car and family of four travelling by sleeper at peak times will pay £156.50 for return tickets. 80 01 26

1980 03 07

A Tesco supermarket opened on the Market Place in October 1965 under its manager John Wilson. It would give employment to a staff of 35 men and women, recruited from the local area. The building had been completed for over a year before Tesco moved in and work went on day and night to turn it into one of the most modern supermarkets in the country. There was 4,200 square feet of shop floor, with its own meat-preparation room, and freezers. For once the firm, always associated with progress and ultra-modern sales methods, had deferred to the old style, commented the News. Four years later the shop was extended to 7,000 square feet after becoming one of the fastest-growing branches anywhere in the country. The new extensions included a clothing and hardware section. It was officially opened in November 1969 by singer Vince Hill, who entertained hundreds of people with his hit song 'Edelweiss'

1980 03 19

Ely has got its traffic problems neatly sorted out nowadays. On Thursdays it is more difficult to park because of the market which is a big attraction. But for the rest of the week the market square is available for free parking and it is quite easy to find a space. Day-trippers with the energy to spare might still prefer to park in the huge car park below the cathedral. One of the most interesting developments has been an important warehouse and industrial development close to the centre whose occupiers include Dorman Sprayers, Verl Vale Ltd and Powerstream Engineering. 80 03 19

1980 03 21

A row of medieval cottages in Silver Street Ely are to be given a new life in a programme of restoration by Cambridgeshire Cottage Improvement Society that will return them to the condition of 'desirable homes'. They were bought some years ago by the late H.C. Hughes, a Cambridge architect, who devoted much energy to the restoration of old buildings. When he died he bequeathed them to the Society in the hope they would carry out his original intention of seeing them restored. It has been a period of crisis for the Society because the market for old cottages has spiralled beyond their means and through the death of their tireless chairman, Geoffrey Wood. 80 03 21c

1980 04 03

With the Common Market haggling over the amount of sugar Britain should be allowed to grow more than 2,250 Cambridgeshire growers have been getting on with the job of drilling this year's crop. The British Sugar Corporation has the capacity to deal with 1.12 million tonnes of sugar from home-grown beet but the EEC want to reduce the total output, which could put smaller factories like Ely out of business. Some kind of compromise will probably be reached but the sugar mountain is getting nearly as bad as the butter and beef surpluses and farmers are nervous 80 04 03

1980 04 22

East Anglia's railway branch lines, untouched since the Beeching axe, face a cutback this summer because of rapidly increasing running costs, deteriorating track and rolling stock and a cut in Government grants. Although Cambridge-based services will not be the first to go, there are signs that they could be affected. It is known that British Rail has been studying a scheme to close a section of the Ely-Norwich line which serves Shippea Hill, Lakenheath and Brandon stations. 80 04 22b

1980 05 16

The Cathedral houses a Stained Glass Museum, visited by Princess Margaret in May 1980. She showed great interest in the workshop at the end of the museum gallery where Mr Geoffrey Carrick and Mr Peter Lister, stained glass craftsmen from Norwich, demonstrated methods of cleaning, restoring and strengthening glass

1980 05 24

There is little chance that Cambridge will have a new maternity hospital before 1988. Plans to resite it had been agreed in 1961 but constantly deferred because of lack of funds. The Government says there is no doubt the present buildings in Mill Road are dreadful and the facilities inadequate. Ways are being found to relieve some of the pressure; pregnancies would no longer be terminated there – giving

more beds – and the closure of the Grange maternity unit at Ely means that more midwives were available so more mother could give birth at home. 80 05 24a

1980 05 30

Mothers in the Ely area cannot have their babies at home despite assurances this would compensate for the closure of the Grange maternity unit. Parliament was told that most mothers would now be expected to use the RAF Hospital freeing midwives for home deliveries. But there are none capable of providing 24-hour cover and the RAF hospital is not staffed to provide a flying squad. The nearest cover is at Mill Road, Cambridge where there is one midwife working a 40-hour week and the other who backs her up has a 10-mile radius to cover. 80 05 30a

1980 09 29

It is fifteen years since Kempton's fashion shop started in Fore Hill, Ely. Now another has opened in the Rookery shopping development at Newmarket. Customers can be sure of good personal service by somebody who knows what the fashion business is about. It will stock the best range of coats in town and will keep up to date with new styles while keeping an eye open for the 'evergreen' popular clothes sought by the woman who remains conservative in her choice. 80 09 29a

1980 11 25

Ely's 25-metre open-air pool was built by the old Ely Urban Council in 1934 and over the years had received a number of improvements, including the installation of heating. It passed into the ownership of East Cambridgeshire District Council in 1974. The site was sold by auction in November 1980, when it raised £13,000. The successful bidder was CHI Industries (UK), holding company of agricultural firm F.A. Standen & Sons (Engineering), which had its Hereward Works in Station Road, Ely. The 16,000 square feet site, covering a third of an acre, just over the road from the works would initially be used for storage.

1980 12 23

Plans for two major developments in Ely have been approved. The Rex Cinema, which has been losing money, will be knocked down to make way for a new Boots store and additional space for Brands. The Club Hotel site will be altered to provide 17 mini shopping units, though there could be traffic problems. But a scheme to knock down a row of derelict cottages in Newnham Street to make way for seven shops, 21 flats and two office suites have been turned down. 80 12 23b

1980 12 23

The only cinema in Ely, the Rex, will close if plans for a store on the site are approved. The owner, C & R Cinemas, has received a 'substantial' offer from Chaldondown Properties of Sutton near Peterborough which wants to knock it down and build a 11,000 square metre store in Market Street. The managing director of the C & R, Mr Tony Rowlett who runs two King's Lynn cinemas in partnership with Mr Malcolm Croot, blamed falling attendances and rising overheads for the decision. The cost of wages, rates and publicity had all increased tremendously, but audiences had not kept pace. Attendances were not helped by the fact that Ely was so close to Cambridge where the new films were shown.

1981

Angel Drove has become an area of considerable new development. In October 1975 Keymarkets announced plans for a 2,000 square feet fresh food supermarket in Ely. It applied for planning permission for the change of use of three factory units on the Angel Drove industrial estate into a supermarket. The supermarket could be on the scale of the new Superkey store at Wisbech and would be intended to serve shoppers living in a ten-mile radius. Opposition to the proposals came from the, East Cambridgeshire District Council who felt traffic flow would create problems and that such a complex would draw away trade from other shops in Ely. A new draft plan for Ely town centre was due to be considered soon and any decision to allow the supermarket could be in opposition to conclusion of the plan. Ely Chamber of Trade were not afraid of a superstore if it were in the city centre. An inquiry in November 1976 was warned that Ely was in danger of falling behind other

towns in the 'shopping revolution'; the proposed store was not a hypermarket, but would be mainly selling groceries & would attract people who were now shopping in the Superkey store at Wisbech and Sainsbury's, Cambridge. The scheme was rejected by the Department of the Environment in January 1977 since it would lead to closure of smaller shops & this would be socially undesirable where village shops, post offices and the like were affected

1981 01 05

The curtain came down at the weekend on the last picture show at Ely's doomed Rex Cinema. A large crowd of filmgoers turned up on Saturday night to see the last film, "Hawk the Slayer", screened at the Rex before it is demolished for a Boots store. The manager, Mr Bernard Brown said: "For many it was something of a sentimental visit. For everyone it was a sad occasion". The Rex is the only cinema left in a city which once boasted three.

1981 01 31

The Viscountess Bury plopped into the Ouse with a new nose, a new right arm and a dud battery. The 93-year-old doyenne of pleasure boats was relaunched at Ely after a refit that included restoration of its figurehead, a well-upholstered Victorian lady. But she would not start and it took over an hour to get her under way. It should be available for hire by the end of April. 81 01 31

1981 02 20

A spectre haunts the narrow streets of Ely and threatens to turn the cathedral city into a ghost town struggling to hold disaster at bay. The closure of the sugar beet factory is a mortal blow for it is the biggest single employer with 215 permanent jobs plus 130 casual workers during the four-month 'campaign'. The agricultural recession has already caused farmers to buy less machinery meaning the closure of the Dorman Sprayer Company and now Standens are shedding 34 jobs. 81 02 20

1981 03 19

There is no lack of demand for Ely Palace School dancing team, which is often called on to give displays for clubs and societies in Cambridgeshire. Nothing unusual about that one might think – many schools have dance teams. But the Palace School caters for the physically handicapped and the remarkable thing about its dancers is that they perform in wheelchairs. The wheelchair dancing team was formed in the summer term of 1977 and has gone from strength to strength. The display team consists of eight members. For them it is a valuable hobby which helps them meet dozens of new friends among the women's clubs, school and local fetes where they perform. But the team is also very competitive, winning the national wheelchair dancing championship in 1978. The 12 main member are: Akram Lari, Natasha Handscomb, Karen Doughty, Caroline French, Paul Granville, Kim Palmer, Colin Walker, Paul Panter, Leslie Graves, Steven Smith, Terence Boyle and Mark Alce. The dance teacher is Mrs Susan Yates. The children wear specially designed evening costumes made by the school's seamstress, Mrs Ellen Brown. Displayed on the back of each wheelchair is the school's emblem

1981 06 20

Ely's new Paradise Swimming Pool was officially opened by Sharron Davis, the British Olympic swimmer. She spent some time in the water with 20 local children who dived in for the first official swim. The 25-metre facility replaces an outdoor pool at Angel Drove which was built in 1934 but had deteriorated badly. 81 06 20

1981 06 24

Ely cathedral originally took centuries to build, but 2,500 children did the job in less than an hour. Dressed to represent walls windows and pillars they constructed a half-scale outline on the Palace Green as their way of marking the ninth centenary of the start of building work on the present cathedral. Important events in its history were re-enacted to the accompaniment of music from five bands. 81 06 24b

1981 09 11

A 100-year-old tradition came to an end when cattle and pigs were auctioned at the last live-stock market held in Ely. During the past few years the market had had less business as more farmers switched from animals to arable farming, so the auctioneers who ran the market Cheffins, Grain & Chalk have decided to call it a day. It was a particularly sad day for the auctioneer, Mr John Grain, who first started work at the market exactly 48 years ago to the day. Before business started, Mr Grain, the third generation of his family to be involved in the market, said: "It's a sad day for me". He said the market was founded by his grandfather, Mr Arthur Trett Grain and continued under his father's guidance until he took over. At 10.45am Mr Grain rang the bell for the last time to summon farmers, dealers and onlookers to the final cattle sale. This time there was only one animal to be sold – a black Hereford brought along by Mr Sidney King, a Littleport farmer. It tipped the scales at 680kg and was bought by King Brothers of Holbeach, Lincolnshire for 100p a kilo. Then 78-year-old Mr 'Nips' Lee of Ely – a market hand for 63 years until he was forced to retire – was called to ring the bell to herald the start of the final pig sale. The bidding was brisk for the 50 pigs on offer, the last one being sold by Mr William Darby of Haddenham. Entering into the spirit of the occasion the bidders pushed the price up to 290p per kg, when it was bought by Mr Sidney King junior, of Littleport. 81 09 11

1981 10 06

The Cambridge Co-operative Band took the brass band repertoire into a new era at Ely Cathedral when it performed the world premiere of a symphonic suite called 'The Fenlands'. Composed by Dr Arthur Wills, the director of music at the Cathedral, it is the first major work scored for brass band and organ. It was recorded by the BBC for transmission later in the month. 81 10 06d

1981 10 09

Excavation work on a new marina at Annesdale, Ely is unearthing remains of The Nancy, a steam-driven cargo barge which plied the River Ouse until she was laid up in 1914. It was then towed near the railway bridge to be cut up for scrap but the work proved too expensive and it was left to rot until the 1940's when the Ouse was widened. It was then in the way so Ted Appleyard dug a hole on the Babylon site, dragged it out of the water and dumped her in it. 81 10 09c

1981 11 04

Shock new proposals to change the face of education in the Ely area have emerged in a secret report. It suggests closure of five more schools at Little Ouse, Stuntney, Prickwillow, Black Horse Drove and St Audrey's, Ely together with Bedford House further education centre. At Littleport the Village College buildings would become a new county primary school. 81 11 04

1981 11 05

Highfield School for handicapped children at Ely should be closed down and the pupils sent to Wisbech or Cambridge for special education, a report recommends. Facilities are inadequate and the number of pupils low. The Headmistress hit back at critics who claimed her buildings are inadequate. A County education working party had said the school should be closed down and pupils sent to Wisbech and Cambridge for special education. But headmistress, Mrs Dorothy Womack said the buildings were of recent origin and with the help of an active parent group the school was well-equipped particularly with special aids for enabling youngsters with standing and balance difficulties to derive more benefit from their education. The ages of Highfield children range from six to 18. "In a school of this nature where you are dealing with different handicaps, you cannot group children chronologically", she said. 81 11 05

1981 11 06

Ely schools closure – reactions – Stuntney, Prickwillow, Littleport – 81 11 06

1981 12 21

The television is at the centre of a major boom in consumer electronics, with everything from home computers to video recorders, video discs, Teletext and Prestel information services, games and, probably within the next few years, programmes beamed from satellites. But many TV addicts are

prepared to watch a picture of bad quality. Now Labgear which has factories at Abbey Walk and Ely have produced plug-in amplifiers to increase the strength of television signals. 81 12 21

1982 01 06

Ely indoor bowls club pioneered a scheme to take bowls into the teeny-bopper market when they staged the country's first promoted under-16 tournament. Nearly 90 youngsters competed with 14-year-old Roger Evans, Jonathan Mayes (12) and Robert Harley (11) winning the triples medals. "We have achieved a lot at Ely but I don't think anything has been better than this", said David Cornwell, the club secretary. 82 01 06a

1982 01 27

The local retail market has survived the recession so far. Ekins have disposed of four shops on the St Neots Market Square which were formerly occupied by Boots, R & E Cadge, Presslands and Falford Books. Developments by St Ives Free Church at Market Hill and at Club Mews Ely have provided 20 shop units, all of which have been let. But in Cambridge increased rents have led to a number changing hands. 82 01 27

1982 04 20

An Ely drapery shop is to close – forced out of business by an enormous increase in rent, S.J. Theobald & Co. has been trading at 23 High Street for about 24 years. Mr Theobald said a 16-fold increase in rent for the shop had been the main reason for the decision to close. "Such an enormous increase has made it uneconomic to continue with the trade we have", he said. The other reason was the very high staff cost. The shop was divided into five separate rooms, all of which had to be staffed. "Added to that, trade in Ely has suffered greatly since the shut down of such places as the sugar beet factory", he said.

1982 05 26

Another Ely shop is closing down – the fourth this year. Rickwood & Sons, the furniture store in Newnham Street is to cease trading by the middle of the summer and the five staff are being made redundant. The firm's announcement comes hard on the heels of Theobald's decision to shut its High Street drapery and the closure of the Newday furniture shop a few yards away. The Ladybird children's boutique in Forehill is also now holding a closing-down sale. Rickwoods is the biggest shop to close so far. The manager, Mr Cyril Prior, said Rickwoods, a family firm which had been trading in Ely for nearly 100 years, had been forced to close because of ever-increasing costs

1982 06 04

Ely's old High Bridge is being knocked down as the new £350,000 bridge alongside is now finished and in use. It is part of the £25 million Fen Link Road which includes the Soham by-pass and is designed to boost the economy of the fens. 82 06 04

1982 06 09

That rascal of Ambridge, Eddie Grundy and his wife Carrie called at the Fish Bar and Café in Market Place Ely. They were recording an episode of 'The Archers' in which their car breaks down during a trip to Great Yarmouth and they seek help at the chip shop. Owner Keith Smithson was delighted to provide the authentic frying sounds. 82 06 09

1982 06 16

'Fenland Suite', the first work ever specially composed for organ solo and brass band, was recorded by the Cambridge Co-op Band with its composer, Dr Arthur Wills on the Ely Cathedral organ. Enthusiasm for the piece and the occasion was obvious, "I like that bit, even though I wrote it myself", said Dr Wills during the play-back of the 'Wicken Fen' movement. 82 06 16

1982 07 10

The headmistress and founder of the Acremont School, Ely, Mrs Marion Saunders, retired in July 1982. The school has been bought by the King's School but will continue to be run separately. Three

hundred former pupils, parents and friends gathered to say farewell and to present Mrs Saunders with a £1,000 cheque. Mrs Saunders started the school in 1949 at Back Hill. Ely, with eight pupils. But she soon moved into the present building in Egremont Street. Now the school has about 120 pupils, aged between four and 11. "I feel sad about leaving, but fulfilled", she said. Mrs Saunders and her husband, a retired teacher, are moving to Barton Mews for their retirement. Also retiring from the school is Mrs Lorna Abbott, who has taught there for 23 years. The new headmistress will be Mrs Patricia Kreyer

1982 07 16

Ely is wrestling with the problems of the recession which has seen 750 people lose their jobs. The city's economy has been rocked by the shutdown of four of its biggest firms – Borden UK, Lytton Boat Building, Dorman Sprayer and the British Sugar Corporation. It had been hoped that the new Club Mews shopping precinct would be a boon to small traders but they are finding the annual £400 rates too much. However a new Tesco supermarket in Broad Street and a Boots store on the site of the Rex Cinema will bring 100 new jobs. 82 07 16a & b & c

1982 08 06

Cambridge now houses an extraordinary number of musical instrument makers. In addition to Mark Stevenson and Trevor Beckerleg, makers of harpsichords, and William Johnson, maker of chamber organs, there are many lesser-known names. Charles Hall is another organ builder, Daniel Bangham specialises in clarinets while John Isaacs and Ian Harwood from Ely are making lutes based on original designs from Bologna and Venice. 82 08 06a

1982 09 16

Old and new fire engines were on show at the Ely fire station open day. The city's new machine, which has only just entered service at the station, was on display alongside the vintage fire pumps from the adjoining museum. The station was open all afternoon with firemen manning stalls and side-shows and putting on a display of firefighting. The day raised £142 for the Fire Service Benevolent Fund

1983 01 04

The BBC has been criticised for charging almost £2,000 for recordings of two "It's a Knockout" programmes showing Ely winning the European championships 10 years ago. The team wanted tapes to be kept in the city as a permanent memorial, but they are too expensive. The only other hope is that someone might have had the equipment to record the programmes though video recorders were few and far between in those days. 83 01 04

1983 01 14

British Rail has decided to drop its Ely-based East Anglian ` service which allows holidaymakers to travel to Scotland or the West Country with their cars and avoid a long slog by motorway. The service has run from Ely since 1979 with two or three trains each way per week. But last year it dwindled to a single train to Stirling on Tuesdays. 83 01 14

1983 01 20

Railway stations at Cambridge, Ely, Newmarket, Audley End, Stansted and Royston could be closed if a Government plan is accepted. Even the electrified Hitchin to Royston line would be abandoned, leaving only the London to Norwich line in East Anglia. Bus services would be provided instead. By cutting BR to the prime Inter-City routes it would be possible to produce an annual profit of £34 million for a 'commercially viable railway'. 83 01 20

1983 01 25

'Cinderella services' – the old, mentally handicapped and mentally ill - are to be boosted following a major change in health care priorities. Wards and clinics at Fulbourn and Ida Darwin Hospitals are to be given a face-lift and the new Hinchingsbrooke Hospital reorganised to cope with increased numbers

of elderly mentally-ill patients. Chesterton, Brookfields and Ely Tower Hospital will also benefit and Newmarket will get new sanitary facilities. 83 01 25

1983 02 10

The Three Blackbirds in Broad Street, Ely, is on the market £70,000. It is sad in appearance and needs major work to turn it into three homes. It could lend itself to a variety of treatments but would require sensitive treatment as it is a listed building. Ely Preservation Trust believes it dates back to at least the 14th century. It has a former open hall with smoke blackened beams and a brick doorway probably inserted in the 15th century. 83 02 10a

1983 03 07

Another of Ely's big furniture stores is to close down – the third in 12 months. Pettit's based in Lynn Road for the past 12 years will cease trading on April 12th. Last spring the Newday Company closed in the High Street followed soon afterwards by Rickwoods which had two large stores in Newnham Street. On a brighter note Readwell, the newsagents, will be expanding into the former Boots store in the High Street. 83 03 07

1983 03 23

An Ely garage has launched a new scheme to help pensioners fight the ever-increasing cost of motoring. Mr Don Vincent is selling them cheaper petrol, cutting the pump price by 2p a gallon. Any elderly motorist who called at his garage at Chettisham would get the discount on showing a pension book or similar form of identity. "What we don't want is little Tommy coming in saying he has brought granddad's car for a fill-up. They must be genuine pensioners", he said. 83 03 23 p12

1983 05 09

Cambridge Co-operative Band have recorded a powerful piece composed specially for them. The music by Dr Arthur Wills, the organist of Ely cathedral, is the four movement 'Fenland Suite' – the first for brass band and solo organ. 83 05 09 p10

1983 06 30

It's always good when something old and unused is refurbished and put back into public use. This was the case when the Balsham-based firm of Bannerman developed part of the Old Club Hotel at Ely into a smart shopping precinct. The company opened up the Mews and stabling area and produced a smart precinct of small shops reminiscent of the early days when the hotel was built. The development which contains 17 shops, is reputed to have cost about £1 million and the precinct flourishes as an attractive trading area

1983 11 19

A big new housing estate with more than 200 houses, bungalows and flats is being planned for a site off Prickwillow Road, Ely. The developers, Barretts, say it will consist of a range of homes from first-time buyer to four-bedroomed houses with two bathrooms and take three years to complete. If approved it will be the biggest in Ely for years – larger than the Kingfield's at Lynn Road where J.F. Bennett from Lakenheath is building 200 houses as part of a phased development which started a couple of years ago. 83 11 19 p7

1984 02 28

Old people pay the heaviest price when they lose their local post office. The Station Road sub-post office in Ely is the latest to be axed following the retirement of Mr George Leonard. Pleas to keep the sub-post office in Debden Road, Saffron Walden open led to one in Cromwell Road closing, meaning families on the new Fairview Estate have to make a one-and-a-half mile trek. After paying bus fares they have very little left from their child benefit. Age Concern has set up a mobile club to visit villages without shops or post offices to enable old people to meet each other, otherwise they would not leave their homes. 84 02 28 p13

1984 03 26

Heavy rain failed to dampen the spirits of pupils at the King's School, Ely, who turned out in force for the annual hoop trundle. Despite the weather the entire school cheered on the 25 competitors who took part in the sixth trundle event in the cathedral precincts. The winners were 17-year-old Neil Emerson and Elizabeth Vigrass, aged 18. Each received hand-made wooden tankards given to the school as perpetual trophies for the trundle. It derives from a custom dating back to the Middle Ages when the school's pupils were allowed to spin their tops and trundle hoops in the cathedral if the weather was bad. The tradition was revived in 1979

1984 08 11

Ted Appleyard of Ely is the seventh generation of watermen, the first three were bargees, the others boatbuilders. He can recall the huge horse and cart ferries which crossed the Ouse and Cam. They were great platforms with an apron at each end which was let down to allow the horse and cart to get back on to land and then hoisted up again. They were essential as there were no bridges for miles. The largest was at Southery and was 40ft by 14ft. 84 08 11 p9

1984 09 28

The first phase of Ely's new road network – designed to take heavy traffic from the centre of the city – has been completed several weeks ahead of schedule. The section between the A142 Witchford Road and the A10 Cambridge Road together with the link road to the station will immediately ease traffic problems along the winding Barton Road – Back Hill area. It will also open up Angel Drove for industrial development. 84 09 28

1984 11 19

The newly opened Larkfield centre for the mentally handicapped in Ely includes classrooms, workshops, art room and activity area together with a special care unit to cater for the needs of the severely handicapped. The outside has been set aside for recreation and horticultural work. It means people will no longer have to make the journey to Cambridge or March for specialist care. 84 11 19 p5

1984 11 23

Bowls, once the pensioners' preserve, is now attracting teenagers. Seventeen-year-old Roger Evans from Royston is their senior three-wood singles champion as well as Chesterton indoor club's under-18 champion. Greg Harlow, 16, from Ely who is a keen rugby, squash and soccer player also rates bowls as his top sport. "There are getting to be as many youngsters as old men in the game now", he observes. David Cornwell, who was barred from Ely's bowls greens and had to play at Littleport when he was 12, is now recognised as one of the country's brightest bowls innovators and has been asked to prepare a scheme for a national under-21 championship. 84 11 23

1985 01 07

Cutlack, the Ely-based hardware merchants, are to close their shop in Burleigh Street, Cambridge. It follows a period of poor trading for shops in the street. They planned the business around the creation of the Grafton Centre but pedestrianisation has not helped in any way and their Newmarket shop does two-and-a-half times more business than the Cambridge one. The site will now be redeveloped with extra shop frontage and improved access to the three floors of office space on the site 85 01 07a

1985 01 16

Scores of new jobs could be on offer in the work-starved Ely area if the thousands of pounds of ratepayers' money being invested in a new business park at Angel Drove is successful. East Cambs District Council has turned developer as part of its policy to diversify the area's industry, which has always leaned heavily on farming. Since the late 1970's hundreds of jobs have been lost with the closure of the Beet factory and Dorman Sprayers but the council hopes to bring high-tech, wealth-creating firms into the district which has a wide range of cheap housing, good health facilities and a host of sport and recreation facilities. 85 01 16a & b

1985 03 27

Hollywood came to Ely as international actors, dozens of cameramen, sound recordists, lighting technicians and make-up girls took over Dean's Meadow, a stone's throw from the Cathedral and transformed it into America at the time of the War of Independence. Replica guns, weapons and tents were brought in together with dozens of extras as the director Hugh Hudson filmed location shots for 'Revolution' 85 03 27

1985 04 30

Sprightly Ely pensioner Ted Appleyard, who started driving in the days of the 'Tin Lizzie' Ford, has bought himself a Sinclair C5 as an 82nd birthday treat. Ted, a former boat builder of Annesdale who took delivery of his first Ford in 1912, has given away his Morris Oxford and opted for the trike, complete with extras. He is really pleased with it, although it hasn't got enough steam to get up Fore Hill. 85 04 30

1985 06 15

Huntingdon and Newport Stations took joint first prize in the Best Kept Railway Station competition with Ely coming joint third. At Huntingdon the 11 staff ensure extra care is taken with disabled passengers, posters and leaflets are kept tidy, brasses and windows cleaned and polished and customers kept informed of breakdowns or delays. There are even six hanging baskets. At Newport senior railwayman Jack Wright and his partner Percy Turner also take a pride in their work while at Ely staff often bring in flowers from their own gardens to brighten up the platforms. 85 05 09a 'Revolution' filmed at Ely – 85 06 15

1985 07 12

One of the houses at the centre of the Ely Cathedral controversy is starting to collapse. The summer's wet weather, followed by the recent dry spell, has caused a gaping hole to appear in the roof of the Black Hostelry within the medieval precincts. Hasty arrangements are being made to get it covered with a tarpaulin and erect a safety cage to stop tiles crashing to the ground. When the Dean and Chapter announced they wanted to build 60 retirement homes in the nearby Paddock to pay for repairs to their homes, they warned it would happen sooner or later. Now clergymen are wrestling with the biggest dilemma ever to face the Cathedral. 85 07 12

1985 08 22

Two years of hard work were toasted in wine and cherries when the Ely Society celebrated the restoration of the Bentham Memorial on Cherry Hill, Ely. When restoration started the memorial had been demolished by vandals and lay in pieces. But with the help of £600 in grants, Ely builder Mr John Ambrose restored it to its former glory while conservation volunteers cleared the spiralling path to the summit.

1985 08 28

Faced with their day-to-day accounts going into the red this year, the Dean and Chapter of Ely Cathedral have appointed a 'business manager'. His brief is to try and increase income from an estimated 200,000 tourists who visit each year but hand over an average of 27 pence a head. It costs £900 a day to maintain the cathedral and £5 million is needed for restoration over the next ten years. The Cathedral has already upset conservationists by planning to build more than 60 homes in The Paddock, a stone's throw from the building. 85 08 28

1986 02 03

Ely Cathedral will make free passes available to residents when admission charges are introduced next month – 86 02 03a

1986 02 26

Nineteen old people have died after a mystery flu bug swept through Ely's Tower Hospital. Six nurses – 10 per cent of the staff - are also off sick and the hospital has been closed to new admissions. Many of the patients are chronically ill and susceptible to diseases which fit people would simply shrug off in a day or so. But an administrator urged relatives not to panic and said that considering all the

strains on the staff, they were doing miracles. Now the hospital it being visited every day by an infection officer. 86 02 26

1986 03 03

Ely Cathedral introduced admission charges for the first time over the weekend and despite the fuss locally over the £1.50 fee, tourists paid up without a murmur of protest with £313 being raised on Saturday. Two visitors from Wolverhampton were happy to pay: "I don't object at all. I object far more to paying £1.25 for a pint of bitter down here when it is only 60p where I came from", one said. The Vice Dean, Canon Dennis Green said that for the first time they had been able to switch on the lights to brighten the gloom inside the Cathedral without worrying about the bill. 86 03 03

1986 03 19

Headmistress of Ely Primary School, Miss Sally Lawson, held a basket of names for Anouska Gregorek & Tristan Ffitch to draw the names of the two pupils who will open the school. The school was established in September 1985 when St Audrey's and St Etheldreda's were amalgamated as part of an educational shake up in Ely. The lucky pupils were Warwick Brown & Joanne Abbs.

1986 05 02

World Video, an Ely studio, has become a magnet for pop groups like Karman Jive, charging £250 for a three-minute video. They also produce their own video shows like 'Dennis the Fire Engine', a series devoted to children while Dick Spendlove, whose mahogany Nottingham-accent tones are heard announcing train arrivals at Cambridge station and doing the Saturday Show at Radio Cambridgeshire, has provided the commentary on a tape devoted to steam trains. 86 05 02b

1986 05 06

Prior Crauden's chapel, Ely, refurbishment – 86 05 06

1986 05 21

Ely Cathedral has accepted a £500,000 windfall from an American charity, The John Paul Getty Junior Charitable Trust. But in return they have dropped controversial plans to build retirement homes on The Paddock. The money will be spent on urgent repairs to the fine collection of medieval buildings but not the Cathedral itself. The magnificent 11th-century building needs at least £4 million to save it for future generations and a 'Great Restoration' appeal has been launched with Prince Philip as its patron 86 05 21

1986 06 25

The Minister for Road and Traffic, Mr Peter Bottomley at the opening of the £8 million Ely & Littleport Bypass which he described as a 'a much needed road'. With him were Coun Keith Leonard, Chairman of Cambridgeshire County Council, Coun Mike Rouse, chairman of East Cambridgeshire District Council, Coun Ron Barber chairman of Littleport Parish Council, the Mayoress of Ely, Mrs Pat Meadows and the Bishop of Ely.

1986 07 07

Thousands of people flocked to Ely Aquafest, the city's annual river gala organised by the local Rotary Club. They enjoyed an afternoon of fun and entertainment including raft racing, a parade of floats, display by the Pathfinders Alsatian dog team, music from the City of Ely Military Band and disco dancing. Dozens of local clubs, charities and societies set up their own fund-raising stalls on the banks of the Ouse for the event, which was opened by the Mayor of Ely, Coun Ron Meadows. Organiser Myles Moffat said: "It's always difficult to estimate how many people attended, but we think we had 8,000-10,000. It was a great success, the weather was perfect for the event. Raft race winners were a team from Stiffkey in Norfolk, second were Green Sports and Social Club. The trophy for the best-decorated craft went to Ely RAF Hospital's floating aircraft

1986 07 10

Brian and Nadine Smith are the couple behind the 147 Snooker Club and anyone who visited the one-time Majestic Cinema and later the bingo hall it became will be amazed at the transformation. The building has been gutted and totally refurbished. The old cinema balcony was dismantled and a new first floor built to accommodate four snooker tables. The ground floor also has four tables – each costing more than £4,000 – and the club is completed by a bar and lounge, nicely decorated and fully carpeted

1986 08 06

A video cassette recording of Ely Cathedral has gone on sale. It is a product of local talent – scripted by Andy Mills, filmed and produced by World Video Productions, narrated by Chris Mills and with musical backing by the cathedral choir. 86 08 06a

1986 08 13

Sydney Theobald, a former Mayor of Ely, died two weeks after celebrating his golden wedding. A well-known and well-respected figure he started work at Eaden Lilley's in Cambridge before setting up a drapery business in Ely High Street which he ran with his wife from 1958 until their retirement. He'd been President of the Chamber of Trade and Rotary Club and was closely involved with the Ribe Association and St Mary's Lodge old folks home 86 08 13a

1986 09 11

A 100-year old tradition has come to an end as cattle and pigs were auctioned at the last livestock market to be held in Ely. It was a particularly sad day for the auctioneer, John Grain, who first started work exactly 48 years ago to the day at the market founded by his grandfather, Arthur Trett Grain. This time there was only one animal to be sold at the final cattle sale – a black Hereford brought along by Sidney King, a farmer of Littleport. The other part of the weekly market, the poultry, produce and furniture auctions will continue as usual. 86 09 11

1986 10 17

One of Ely's oldest buildings is to take on a new lease of life as a showcase for the region's antique dealers. Conversion work on the derelict maltings building next to the English College at Waterside is nearly complete. It will provide a base for 50 antique dealers, giving them a permanent showcase while carrying on their business elsewhere. The man behind the scheme, Graham Peters, hopes it will become an additional tourist attraction 86 10 17

1986 10 25

Ely Cathedral is to play a vital part in bringing the latest technology to East Anglia. Cellnet, Britain's leading mobile telecommunications network, is to use the 215ft West Tower as a base station to extend cellular radio coverage. The cathedral's skyline will be unaltered: aerials will be located in the turrets with the base station in the belfry. The firm will provide a 'substantial' sum as rental and sponsor the flower festival next summer 86 10 25

1986 11 25

Ely Diocese's old-fashioned 'Contact' newsletter has rolled off the press for the last time. Instead a new 52-page glossy magazine will be distributed, changing the way church news is reported. The monthly letter from the Bishop will be retained but there will also be pages on fashion, motoring, farming and gardening. The first issue contains good luck messages from the Archbishop of Canterbury and several local MPs. The editor promises that it is not going to be a tame in-house newspaper. 86 11 25

1986 12 01

Clergy at Melbourn are planning an extension to the parish church on a concrete 'raft' so graves will not be disturbed. A meeting room, vestry, kitchen and lavatories will be built over the old graveyard. There are no headstones and the last burial was more than 100 years ago. It is becoming quite a common thing: similar scheme at Cherry Hinton, Milton and Ely have all been successful. If graves are disturbed the church would give special permission for reburial 86 12 01b

1986 12 13

Cromwell House, one of Ely's most historic buildings, may be put on the market by the Diocesan Board of Finance. The house is used as the vicarage for St Mary's Church but it no longer meets present-day needs and the Board want to build a new vicarage in the garden. Oliver Cromwell lived in the property between 1636 and 1647 when he was Collector of the Ely Tithes. His two children were born there and baptised in St Mary's church 86 12 13

1986 12 29

The Duke of Edinburgh visited Ely Cathedral to see for himself what needs to be done on the crumbling 11th-century building. Prince Philip, who is patron of the £4 million appeal fund, donned a boiler suit and clambered to the roof for a view of the nave which is dangerously decayed. The Dean, Bill Patterson, said the visit would boost the funds and that Her Majesty the Queen had given a personal donation 86 12 29

1987 01 07

Group Captain John Baird, the new Commanding Officer of RAF Hospital, Ely was welcomed by the previous Commanding Officer, Group Captain Jim Greig. But changes were in the air and closure was announced. The last RAF patient left in July 1992 & the hospital passed to Cambridge Health Authority as a community hospital after a considerable campaign by residents to keep a hospital facility in Ely. Baird Lodge, a new sheltered housing development was opened nearby.

1987 01 28

Neolithic burial ground found near Ely – 87 01 28

1987 03 09

Farm workers and their families marched in protest through the centre of Ely to highlight their national pay claim for £140 a week. More than 100 workers from Cambridgeshire and surrounding counties joined the march – believed to be the first trade union rally held in the city. En route from the Ship Lane car park to the Centre E youth club, they stopped at the Cambridgeshire headquarters of the National Farmers' Union in Broad Street where they handed a letter to the county secretary, Mr Derek Crawley.

1987 04 16

Queen distributes Maundy money, Ely Cathedral.

A congregation of 2,600 people attended the service when 61 men and 61 women, one for each of the Queen's life received the coins in appreciation of their service to the church or the community. Afterwards accompanied by the Bishop of Ely, she met residents of the Tower Hospital and Sue Ryder Home in front of Palace Green – 87 04 16

1987 05 08

Ely Cathedral boasts the greatest scissor roof in the world but many of the rotting medieval beams need replacing. So they have launched a 'Raise the Roof' project enabling schoolchildren to buy new beams and sign them for posterity before they are placed in the roof. Restorers have also been given the chance to clear up the marvellous painted ceiling which is already looking bright and new again 87 05 08a

1987 05 26

Ely's Catholic church has been consecrated – more than 80 years after it was built. Over 200 people packed the little church in Egremont Street for the ceremony performed by the Catholic Bishop of East Anglia. Dedicated to St Etheldreda, it was completed in 1903 and given a solemn blessing. But in those days it had to be endowed before consecration. Now it was time to put matters right 87 05 26a

1987 05 28

Cambridge author Tom Sharpe's gloriously irreverent comic novel 'Porterhouse Blue' is about to become a new four-part TV series and the University should be bracing itself. Nothing is sacred: a dignified procession through the streets dissolves into farce and gas-filled condoms fill a college courtyard like some shimmering, quivering wheatfield. Every college is convinced it is based on them. Little was actually filmed in Cambridge: Ely provided a more attractive alternatives. David Jason stars in the role of Scullion, the college porter who will put up with anything from the students as long as he considers them 'gentlemen' 87 05 28

1987 07 02

Ely and neighbouring villages have seen an astronomical rise in planning applications. In the 1960s there were few areas of growth between Cambridge and Newmarket and developers never got north of Histon or Cottenham. Now prices are increasing by 15% a year and a good plot for housing has increased six-fold to £30,000. Unemployment is low while improved train services have improved accessibility for people travelling to Newmarket and Stansted. 87 07 02b

1987 02 02

Comins estate agency, a name synonymous with the Ely property where it has been established since 1850, has amalgamated with the Cambridge firm of Cheffins, Grain and Chalk 87 02 02c # c.06

1987 07 10

The Princess captivated everyone with her beauty and charm during her visit to Ely where the former Royal Air Force Hospital was renamed in her honour. Wearing a navy blue and white striped silk suit, she arrived to cheers of welcome at the 168-bed hospital. The Princess of Wales captivated everyone with her beauty and charm during her visit to Ely. The Commanding Officer, Group Captain John Baird showed her to the male surgical ward where she met three men recovering from cataract operations. The men who had been virtually blind had a perfect view of the Princess of Wales – 24 hours after an operation to restore their sight. Ronald Jakes of Prickwillow, Charles Few from Cromer and Squadron Leader Jim Hickie of Brampton. Mr Jakes said: "One day might eyesight was terrible, the next I could see clearly. What an honour to be able to see and meet the Princess of Wales. After lunch and a walkabout where she thrilled the crowds with chats the Princess opened a three-day flower festival at Ely Cathedral and attended a private Evensong in the Lady Chapel 87 07 10

1987 08 18

Ely Cathedral has been hit by a dramatic slump in visitors: numbers have plummeted by 40 per cent since £1.50 admission charges were brought in. But it has been a poor year for sightseers generally, due to a terrorist scare frightening off American visitors. King's College Chapel was the fifth most popular free historic attraction in England with 750,000 visitors, the same as last year. The biggest success of all was Audley End mansion, Saffron Walden, which had over 73.000 visitors compared with less than 42,000 in 1985 87 08 18

1987 08 24

Ely blind bowlers – 87 08 24

1987 09 23

A major new tourist attraction at Ely involving the creation of a working scale model of the fenland drainage system could draw thousands of visitors and create badly-needed jobs, two men believe. They have sunk several thousand pounds into a feasibility study and earmarked a potential site for the six-acre development. It would feature a model village and miniature cathedrals as well as working locks and sluices such as the Denver complex. This would allow visitors to understand the water control mechanisms with an elevated viewing area 200 feet long. Now they are looking for financial backing 87 09 23a

1987 11 27

Anson Packaging's new £1.5 million extension to its production space was opened by the Mayor of Ely, Coun. Margaret Gordon-Potts. The firm, which started in 1971 at St Ives with 12 staff, moved to

the site of the former Haddenham railway station in 1977. It now operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week and employs 300 people. They are a leading producer of thermoformed plastic packaging for the food trade and an approved supplier to Marks & Spencer 87 11 27

1987 12 23

The Chairman of East Cambridgeshire District Council has hit back at opponents of its bid to establish a new town in the Wilburton area. A major row has blown up after Wilburton Parish Council said it had lost all confidence in their integrity. The villagers fear a town half the size of Ely would swamp the existing community. But the District Council welcomes the development. It is one of about 20 sites and if the Inspector rejects it, one of the others would be chosen, he says 87 12 23

1988 03 22

Ely Cathedral restoration appeal received a £3,000 boost from Kries Viersen, Cambridgeshire's twin region in West Germany. The donation, given as part of celebrations to mark the fifth anniversary of the twinning link, was handed over to the Dean, the Very Rev Bill Patterson after a special evensong. The Dean said the cash would be used to help restore the east wall and the visitors were shown where work is to be done. He said the appeal fund now stood at £4,045,000 with an additional £70,000 in the 21st Century fund, set up to finance regular maintenance once restoration is completed. – German visitors tour roof – 88 03 22a

1988 04 11

Beneath a shroud of scaffolding and sheeting Ely's magnificent cathedral is being restored in one of the biggest ecclesiastical renovation projects undertaken in this country. Not since Victorian times has the cathedral undergone such a major facelift. A total of £1.7 million is being spent on phase one alone. More than 40 craftsmen employed by Cambridge building firm Rattee and Kett, supervised by site agent Mr Roy Blunt and cathedral architect Mr Peter Miller are already two thirds of the way through the project. At the end of the month they will start on phase two, the restoration of the Lady Chapel, the east wall of the presbytery and the north choir aisle. Phase three – the final project – will involve work on the south transept, the south west transept and the west tower. For the past 15 months a dedicated teams of craftsmen and experts have been working more than 100 feet above the tourists' gaze to clean a century of grime off the huge panel paintings on the nave ceiling which were caked with grime and soot from the ancient coal heating system. But the £4 million project to repair the havoc caused by the weather and the passage of time on the mighty Norman building will not be the last 88 04 11a & b

1988 04 18

Some of the congregation howled and barked when the organist started to play the first hymn during a service at Ely Cathedral. Others let out yelps and growls that echoed around the mighty Norman building. A few even managed to doze despite the racket while others munched contentedly wondering what all the fuss was about. The vice-dean, Canon Dennis Green, used a microphone to make himself heard to the rest of the congregation. No one minded about the chaos because all were taking part in a blessing service for animals and owners, thought to be the only one of its kind in the country. It was organised by the Dean and Chapter in conjunction with Wood Green Animal Shelters following the success of a similar event last year. Hundreds of people took animals of all shapes and sizes to the service – cats, dogs, sheep, goats, ponies, donkeys, pigs and cows.

1988 04 21

Major refurbishment work has been completed at Cambridge's long-established department store. Joshua Taylor opened his first shop in Ely in 1810 which continued until 1923. His son started in Sidney Street Cambridge in 1860, spreading to Bridge Street in 1955. It became a household name to shoppers, symbolising a traditional way of life. This will continue say the new owners Arlington Securities who plan 'an exciting future' for the shop. They have retained the elegant sweeping central staircase and now with expansion and financial backing, the future looks rosy. 88 04 21c & d

1988 05 03

Ely's new high-tech Trigon Motors complex on Angel Drove is equipped with all the latest motor industry aids – from computerised diagnostic machines for engine tuning and laser-guided jigs for repairs in the workshop to a hot food counter. The forecourt has 13 self-service pumps dispensing leaded or unleaded petrol and a 'talking' pump which gives a recorded message to warn motorists that they are about to fill their tanks with diesel. 88 05 03

1988 05 19

The Ely Local Plan sets out radical proposals to revamp the city. It includes setting aside land to build a new industrial estate between Cambridge Road and Witchford Road which could attract up to 2,000 jobs and building up to 1,500 homes on the outskirts of the city. Other proposals include building a new primary school near the proposed housing estate, restricting part of the city centre as a pedestrian area with the building of new car parks & creating a new multi-million pound shopping complex. Two London-based development companies are vying for the chance to build the new shopping centre on the cattle market site. Both propose to build a covered complex and made improvements to buildings in the nearby Market Square. Both schemes would involve demolishing and redeveloping the Post Office and one would also include knocking down and rebuilding the nearby Tesco stores. 88 05 19a

1988 08 09

Twenty years ago the majority of Ely people were employed either on the land, in agricultural engineering or at the sugar beet factory in Queen Adelaide which closed in 1981. A report in 1985 suggested they should try to attract industry and hundreds of thousands of pounds were spent to buy 12 acres in Angel Drove to create a high-quality science park environment. Now additional plots are being developed on a second phase where Cambridge Electronic Industries has plans to base its subsidiary, Labgear Cablevision. 88 08 09a

1988 10 19

The Nyton in Barton Road, Ely, has opened as a restaurant under Robert Setchell. 88 10 19a

1988 11 14

Police were called to Ely Cathedral to eject a woman who staged a demonstration during the Remembrance Day service. Retired Wing Commander John Grant, president of the Ely Royal British Legion said that despite the incident the service and the parade was one of the best

1988 12 16

Seven newspapers in Cambridgeshire belonging to the Sharman family are to be sold, but the jobs of all 220 staff are safe. The titles, which include the Hunts Post, Ely Standard and Cambridgeshire Times will be bought by Thomson Regional Newspapers subject to referral to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. Other titles included in the deal are the Peterborough, Wisbech and Kings Lynn Standards and the Rutland and South Lincs Classified. The news comes just a week after the funeral of the former managing director, Charles Sharman. 88 12 16

1988 12 17

More than 300 youngsters attended the annual Christingle service at Ely Cathedral and raised £350 for the work of the Church of England Children's Society. They took purses containing donations for the society which they presented to the Bishop of Huntingdon, the Rt Rev Gordon Roe and then each received Christingles – oranges decorated with a ribbon, candle and fruit, part of a centuries-old Moravian custom

1988 12 23

Ely mobile library driver Fred Kirby retires – 88 12 23

1989 01 26

Ely firemen are the top of the Cambridgeshire ladder. The city's full-time fire crew has won the county's annual station efficiency award. The news has delighted the six full timers and their boss, Station Officer Gerry Walker, at the tiny station in Egremont Street. "We set ourselves a very high standard and it has paid off. It is a real team effort", he said.

1989 03 15

Ely tourism report – 89 03 15c

1989 04 05

Sir Harry Secombe took time off from filming ITV's popular religious programme 'Highway' at Ely to open a cathedral shop in the High Street. The new venture by the Dean and Chapter is based in the medieval building originally used as the cathedral choir school and sells a range of local products. Two other shop units have been taken by clothing retailers. Above is a new home for the city's museum, previously housed in cramped accommodation at the rear 89 04 05

1989 04 11

Cambridge could be a seaside town by 2050, a report by an environmental group claims. Global warming would cause the sea to rise by at least five metres over the next 60 years and Parliament might have to move to Birmingham because vast areas of central London will disappear beneath water. Cambridge Scientists are also working on a study which shows most of the county under water with Ely on an island once again. Currently a fifth of the Anglian Water Authority's area is below the high tide level 89 04 11

1989 04 19

Why business is in charge at Ely Cathedral – 89 04 19

1989 05 11

Labgear Cablevision, the television communications equipment company. It makes good profits but its business in the area of satellite dishes, aerials and cable TV distribution systems does not fit into CEI's new strategic plans. It employs 125 people on the Cambridgeshire Business Park at Ely with 100 more at its main base at Abbey Walk, a site being considered for redevelopment for housing. It is one of three that Cambridge Electronic Industries plan to sell, leaving Cathodeon Crystals at Nuffield Road, Newmarket Microsystems, PED & Varelco at Newmarket in the local area. Cambridge Interconnection Technology, which used to be on the Cambridge Science Park has moved to Scotland 89 05 11

1989 05 13

A £1.5m improvement scheme to the King's School, Ely, was opened by Mr Michael McCrum, vice-chancellor of the University of Cambridge. The scheme has seen the building of new facilities and the refurbishment of existing buildings and has taken ten years to complete. Builders finished the final section, new buildings to house day boys, nine classrooms and a sixth-form common room last year. Earlier parts of the scheme included accommodation for girls, and the conversion of the roof space in the old Hereward building to provide careers and examination department along with offices and meeting rooms. The physical science building was completely refurbished & a further floor was added at a cost of almost £250,000

1989 05 19

The A10 will be dualled from Cambridge to Ely as part of an unprecedented Government roads programme. The A1 is to be made a continuous three-lane motorway from London to Huntingdon, the M11 is to have three continuous lanes from London to Cambridge and the A604 is to be dualled with three lanes on each side from Cambridge to Huntingdon. The A11 will be made a dual carriageway from Newmarket and to Norwich and the Northern bypass will have three lanes from Girton interchange to Milton Road. It will all save lives and make industry more competitive. 89 05 19

1989 05 30

Thousands of spectators lined the streets of Ely for the city's record-breaking Hospital Carnival parade. They helped raise £3,835 – more than ever before – for the old folks at the city's Tower Hospital. More than 50 floats together with bands and majorettes took part in the 29th annual parade organised by the Friends of the Hospital. The parade toured part of Ely, then stopped for a united

church service on St Mary's Green before winding round the rest of the city. The Friends chairman, Mr Ken Howard, said he was 'over the moon' with the success of the event, which raised £3,200 last year

1989 05 31

Ely, for many years the backwater of Cambridgeshire, is shaking off its retiring image. Electrification of its main line to London will soon start and the Government has announced plans for the dualling of the A10 to Cambridge. Ely has space for expansion along Angel Drove where a Business Park houses a number of scientific firms. Cambridge Electronic Industries have reserved one of the large sites for a new development. 89 05 31a

1989 06 06

Seventeen former sailors from the wartime destroyer 'Walpole', which was adopted by the City of Ely in 1942, attended a service to see the ensign of their old ship 'laid up' at the Cathedral. After a reunion dance the ex-sailors attended a wreath-laying ceremony at the war memorial before a civic reception prior to the highlight of the gathering. Afterwards they marched through the city for the salute which was taken on the Market Place by the ship's former Navigating Officer, Lieut. Charles Tooley. The weekend culminated with tea at the High Flyer pub. 89 06 06

1989 09 06

The Cottages Day Hospital for the mentally ill at Ely was opened by the Mayor, Coun Percy Powles. Two dilapidated cottages in the grounds of the Tower Hospital have been converted to form the unit with a team of nurses, therapists and psychologists who will tailor care to each person. It will provide support for elderly people living in the community who might otherwise have to be in hospital and is a fine example of the work being carried out by the NHS 89 09 06

1989 09 08

Ely Museum opened in 1975 but closed in 1987 so the Dean and Chapter could undertake a major restoration programme on the medieval buildings in High Street. Now it has reopened with a new gallery named after Vernon Cross whose tea rooms were a popular feature of Forehill. Another is in memory of Reg Holmes who did much to record the history of the city. Its exhibits include the bicycles on which James Moore won the world's first cycle race in Paris in 1868 and the Cambridgeshire Regiment's drums lost during the fall of Singapore. 89 09 08b

1989 11 24

Rare medieval wall paintings found on walls of cottages in Silver Street, Ely – 89 11 24

1989 12 28

Ely has gone from gloom to boom over the past 10 years. The closure of the Sugar Beet Factory at Queen Adelaide with the loss of jobs was the biggest blow. The weekly livestock market closed as did Littleport Village College and a number of schools. But now the city, for so long a sleepy backwater in the fens, is about to witness one of the most dramatic periods of change in its entire history. There will be multi-million pound shopping centre, housing estates and industrial areas together with a new community of 1,500 houses between Ely and Cambridge. 89 12 28b

1990 01 16

Cambridge's planning chief fears for the future if some of the high-tech and other commercial development, which is clamouring to start up in the city, cannot be diverted to other parts of the county. Officials are preparing an action plan based on a report by University land experts. Ely, Haverhill, Chatteris and March are suffering from a depressed economy and would benefit from the establishment of firms sent from Cambridge 90 01 16a

1990 01 18

Ely Co-op store in Market Street is set to close, the latest victim of a multi-million pound property battle. The building will be sold to Raglan Property Trust, one of two firms seeking to build a large

new supermarket which would make the food store unviable. But Burton Property Trust also hopes to redevelop the centre in conjunction with ECDC 90 01 18

1990 02 14

Mark Entwistle, the Ely bowler, won both singles and pairs area finals in the national championship in the space of two days to win through the finals at Melton Mowbray 90 02 14e

1990 02 26

Staff at Ely's Lamb Hotel used their experience to take top honours in the city's pancake races. The four-strong team beat off nine other sides to take the engraved frying pan presented to the winners by Ely's deputy mayor, Mr Brian Ashton. In the finals along Market Street, the Lamb team outran staff from Cutlack's, the city centre hardware store. The event was revived by Ely Leos, the junior division of the Lions Club after an absence of five years. They hope to raise more than £100 for cancer research and intend staging the even each year from now on.

1990 03 08

Ely Cathedral is to start major work on the Lantern Tower after gales sucked out panes of glass, buckled panels and snapped fittings on the lead-covered wooden infrastructure. It could be likened to the effect of wind on a greenhouse. The glass was not smashed – it was sucked out with terrific force. The damage could have been much worse had not workmen who realised what was happening managed to make temporary repairs to the tower by boarding it up during the height of the storm. Without that action it could have been a complete disaster – 90 03 08a

1990 03 09

Ely Co-op to stay open after collapse of property deal – 90 03 09

1990 08 07

Ely RAF Hospital 50th anniversary march-past – 90 08 07c

1990 10 12

Contracts for the conversion of the Old Palace building into a new Sue Ryder Home at Ely were officially handed over in October 1990. The conversion would treble the capacity of the existing home for the incurably ill, & bring the total of beds to 42. At the ceremony were, (from left) Judy Maud, Bishop Stephen Sykes, Rattee & Kett contracts manager Grant Barker, Brian Ashton, appeal director Timothy Finn, matron of the Old Palace Home Patsy Woodhead, Dr Ian Nichol and Sarah Dani (architect) – 90 10 12b

1990 10 13

Ely heads for mixed economy but lack of progress on major shopping redevelopment – 90 10 13b

1990 12 12

Oliver Cromwell House, Ely, opens as tourist centre – 90 12 12a

1991 04 06

Garish designs for shops in Ely city centre will be outlawed in an attempt to save the area's character. The Market Square is full of neon signs, startling colours and 'horrendous' examples of new buildings merged with old which are spoiling the city's character, say planners. Now officers at East Cambridgeshire District Council have drawn up a new policy guide defining tasteful shop settings. Tim Aldworth, development manager, said Ely's historic character would disappear unless more careful thought was given to design. "There are one or two horrendous cases where shop fronts run across old buildings and totally ruin their appearance", he said. "It's too late to replace many of our historic buildings from the Market Square. They have already been replaced by modern design classics such as Tesco and the Post Office". Neon fascias should be replaced with hanging signs indicating the shop's purpose – for instance a boot pictured outside a shoe shop. Some shops were

given a pat on the back by planners. An old-style shopping arcade along Club Mews was described as having tasteful traditional details and an attractive overall appearance

1992 09 10

In September 1992 a street festival was held to celebrate the completion of the £500,000 pedestrianisation project in the city centre. The City of Ely Chamber of Trade and Industry organised the event which brought together a wide variety of craft and antique stalls, together with charity stalls and trade stands. Included in the entertainment line-up were buskers, face painters, Morris dancers, Punch & Judy & the City of Ely Band. There were exhibitions by craftsmen, including a blacksmith and a cooper who made barrels in the traditional fashion. The festival attracted large crowds.

1993 05 13

By April 1990 the Tower Hospital, a former Victorian workhouse was beyond economic repair. The hospital's manager, Mr Colin Vincent said, "The staff are providing the highest standards of clinical care in appalling surroundings and we need to do something about that for them and for patients". The Tower Hospital officially closed in May 1993 when 62 elderly patients were taken to their new home at the refurbished Princess of Wales Hospital in a fleet of ambulances and minibuses. The old hospital was sold.

1993 11 26

In November 1993 the Queen returned to view some of the £4 million restoration work which had been carried out since 1986. Then at the Sue Ryder Home she was presented with a bouquet and met Lady Ryder of Warsaw together with volunteer workers in her international charity.

1994 02 01

Youngsters throughout Ely have cleaner and brighter play areas – thanks to the efforts of mothers and the generosity of the local council. Several parks around the city have been upgraded and improved following an energetic campaign by mums who formed the Play Safe Ely Group. Seven areas have been re-equipped by architects Hereward Design and the work was paid for by the District Council. The revamped play areas were opened by Coun John Seaman, vice-chairman of East Cambridgeshire District Council, Coun Owen Bethell chairman of the council's recreation & tourism panel and the Mayor of Ely Coun Walter Bebbington, seen here at the St John's Road playground

1997 07 10

A radiant Princess Margaret officially opened Ely Cathedral's spectacular Flower Festival. Thousands of flowers have transformed the Ship of the Fens into a blaze of colour from floor to ceiling. An excited crowd of about 200 people waited outside the cathedral to catch a glimpse of the Princess. She was in a relaxed mood as she admired the 300 arrangements on the theme "The Power and the Glory", which a dedicated army of 500 talented arrangers from East Anglia had skilfully displayed. The Dean, the Very Rev Michael Higgins, paid tribute to the flower festival designer Sue Brinton and her dedicated band of helpers. This is the third flower festival to be held at the cathedral. Diana, the Princess of Wales, opened the last one which took place 10 years ago. Members of the City of Ely Flower Club were delighted that the royal visitor had stopped to admire the 6,000 blooms which they had arranged in a mosaic design on the floor. Judith Underwood of Bentham Way, Ely, said: "I think she was overawed by it all. I don't think she expected to see what was in here"

1999 07 08

Primary schoolchildren going to Ely Community College in September have spent three days getting to know their new school. The 200 pupils followed a normal school timetable and attended lessons in readiness for entering secondary school in the new academic year. The idea behind the scheme is to familiarise the pupils with their new school so they know what to expect – and are not lost when they arrive. Principal Dr Carole Stroud said: "The pupils loved it – they always do. It is lovely to see them coming in". Most of the pupils come from St Mary's Junior School, St Joseph's Junior School, Downham Feoffes, Littleport Village College or Littleport Millfield schools

1999 11 22

The metal gates were pulled down for the public to see Ely's £5 million shopping complex. Now shoppers can wander through The Cloisters following its official opening and take a short cut through to Waitrose, but despite the red ribbon being cut, it will be at least two weeks before the first shop opened. Jon Higham, property manager for Aardvark Developments and Valerie Leake, vice chairman of East Cambridgeshire District Council, congratulated everyone involved in the scheme before declaring The Cloisters open for business. Mrs Leake said: "It is a splendid development which will breathe life into the city centre". Peacocks Stores will be the first shop to open in the 67,000 square foot complex. It is hoped Sportsworld and Card Fair will be open for Christmas trading. Wilkinsons, Iceland and Savers Health & Beauty will be open early next year, along with the new library. Four of the ten units still have not been let, but the developers believe the centre will be full by the middle of next year.

2000 03 28

Frozen food giant, Iceland, will welcome customers to its branch in the Ely shopping centre on April 4th. Wilkinson, which sells home and garden products, will open on April 19. James Gibson, the manager of the new Iceland branch said: "I think the Iceland store will be a real asset to Ely". The new shop will create up to 16 new jobs. Jeff Young, Wilkinson branch manager said: "We really have had a fantastic response from the people of Ely to the news that Wilkinson is coming to town. The store will create 18 new full and part-time jobs, ranging from till assistants and cashiers to customer advice and security guards